

CHRIST
ALONE
EXALTED

In fourteen Sermons preached in,
and neere London, by the late
Reverend

TOB^{IAS} CRISTE,

Doctor in Divinity, and faithfull Pastor
of Brinkworth in Wilt-shire.

As they were taken from his own mouth
in short writing, whereof severall copies were
diligently compared together, and
with his owne Notes.

And published for the satisfaction and comfort
of Gods people.

Volume I.

Behold yee despisers and vnder and perish; for I worke
a work in y^e dayes, which you shall in no wise beleewe,
though a man should tell you, Act. 13. 41.

London, Printed in the year, MDCXLIV.



♦♦♦♦♦ S in all things (beloved brethren) the

Now there is none, I suppose, that is in any

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conciliation with God. For whilst God is looked upon as an enemy, what can there be but a continuall fearefull looking for of judgement, and fiery indignation to consume his adversaries, seeing our God is a consuming fire, *Heb. 12. 20.* For if the estate was so dreadfull, which *Moses* threatned to the Israelites, when he told them, *They should have just cause of feare both day and night, because they should have no assurance of their lives, Deut. 18. 66.* How much more terrible must it needs be, when we not only carry this temporall life in our hands every moment, but also there is no assurance, but that the pale horse on which death rideth, hath bell following after him. *Rev. 6. 8.* and so there is no assurance of eternall life? This must needs be *just cause*, with a witnesse, *to feare both day and night*: Except therefore the soule be translated from under the Dominion of the King of feares, and peace, and reconciliation, fully and freely manifested; the heart must needs (especially in such times as these, wherein it is continually call'd upon, where is thy rest?) bee over-whelmed with horror and distraction.

That therefore the Lords people might have an impregnable rampire, and sure repose; that they might have a City to dwell in, whereunto the Lord hath made salvation it selfe to be for Walls and Bulwarks, *Esa. 26. 1.* Therefore hath the Lord sent the glorious Word of his free Grace, in the mouth of this Messenger of Peace among you, creating the fruit of his lips to be peace, I think I may truly say unto thousands both of them that were asfarre off in profanenesse; and to them that were neere,
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in legall profession. For this free Grace that is set at nought, and seldome mentioned by many builders, but with reproach; the Lord will make the chief of the Corner, and lay it with joy and shouting of those that embrace it, though it shall be for a stone of stumbling to the Adversaries thereof. This free Grace laid forth in the Redemption that is in *Iesus Christ* freely bestowed, is that only thing that is able to make us stand with confidence, both in all the troubles of this life, and also before the Tribunall seat of God, even in the houre of death, and in the day of judgement; when all the righteousness of our own works will vanish away as the morning dew; wherein the great Apostle desired not to be found, *Phil 3. 9*. Although he had a measure of it, farre above the strictest in these times: Yea, there is nothing but the precious blood shed of the Son of God, that was able to deliver us from that damnation, which the best of our own workes and righteousness do daily and hourly deserve: So that to think to rest here, is to sleep upon the top of a Mast, where every puffe of wind is ready to cast a man into the bottome of the Sea. And surely, notwithstanding their pretended deep humiliations, they seem never to have beene truly acquainted with the *Terrors of God*, who dare appeare before him in their imperfect, and therefore sinfull Sanctification and duties. For if the Lord God ran upon his only beloved Sonne like a Lion, with such fury and indignation, when he was but wrapt in our iniquities, that he cryed out in that most strange and lamentable manner, *My God, my God, why hast*

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thou forsaken me? Oh then, how should we dare to look upon him, or come in his presence, in our own dung and ragges, covering our selves with our own confusion as with a cloak; For if this was done to the green tree; what shall bee done to the dry? Luk 23.31.

But yet although in regard of our owne works, even the best of them, we have just cause to lay our lips in the dust for evermore: Yet in regard of this free Grace of God, being operative in his free choosing, in his free justifying and saving us, not onely, not for, but not so much as according to the works of righteousness which we have done, 2 Tim. 1.9. Tit. 3.5. There is just matter of joy and exultation, and even of strong consolation, to them that flie unto the throne of Grace; which hath been so faithfully, so evidently, and purely set forth unto you by this glorious instrument of *Christ*, that your hearts can testifie, you were led forth by the waters of comfort, whilst others wandred in a wilderness by the waters of *Marah*, that you enjoy'd a feast of fat things, whilst others sate in *Egypt* under their task Masters, with their Leeks and Onyons. And this the Lord was pleased to manifest unto you, that ye might not goe heavily in these heavie and sad times, wherein men are at their wits end: but that ye might lift up your heads, because the full manifestation of your redemption draweth neere; that ye might with perfect boldnesse, even unto a triumph, not only look in the face, but trample upon the most terrible of all your enemies, sin, death, Satan, and Hell it self, through the great and glorious conquest of the Captaine of our salvation:

For

For God our Father by this Grace alone hath not only delivered us from this present evill world, but also translated us into the Kingdom of his deare Son, and made us freely meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light.

It is true indeed brethren, the *Prince of darknesse*, cannot but exceedingly repine, and fret to see a stronger then he thus bind him, and release his prisoners, and vindicate his captives into so glorious a liberty. And therefore doth he bestir himself, with all deceivablenes of unrighteousnes, to retain, not only the profane, that are destitute of the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, but especially those that have a form of godlinesse in strict and religious walking, who yet deny in effect the Gospel of Free Grace, which is the power thereof, because *it is the mighty power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, Romans 1.16.* Hence come those slanderous and calumnious imputations of Antinomianism, and Libertinism in Doctrine; and of loosnesse, and licentiousnesse in conversation; which vile slanders have bin often cast, both upon this faithfull witnesse of the Lord, and the embracers of that Doctrin. Wherunto we must needs answer in the Lords words, *Zach. 3.2. The Lord rebuke thee Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee; are not we as brands pluckt out of the fire? And in the words of the Apostle, wilt thou not cease to pervert the straight wayes of the Lord? Acts 13.10.*

For was he, or are we indeed Antinomists, enemies to the Law? God forbid. Nay we never were, we never could be truly friends with it, un-

till it pleased the Lord to discover unto us the words of this life. The Law look't upon us as an enemy, shaking over us continually the rod of Gods indignation, scourging and piercing our souls and consciences with Scorpions, with menaces, with curses, with terrible and austere exactions, and that when we had no strength. How then could wee look upon it, but as upon a most bitter and implacable adversary? But after the kindnesse and love of God our Saviour appeared, who not according to the works of righteousness that wee have done, but according to his mercy hath saved us. After the Lord JESUS had taken the hand-writing that was against us, and nailed it to his Crosse, and exhibited a full satisfaction to all the Law could demand of us, or lay to our charge; This only was able to settle us in an everlasting peace and reconciliation with the Law. Right reckoning, men say, makes long friends. But when the Creditor and debtor not onely agree in their accounts, but also the debtor is able to produce a full acquittance for the uttermost farthing that was due, there can be no breach, no jarring between them: the case is ours (everlasting praise and thanks be rendred unto the Lord our righteousness) our acquittance is recorded every where in the word of his Grace; Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth, Rom. 10. 4. Wherefore wee are become dead to the Law by the body of Christ, and delivered from the law, Rom. 7. 4. 6. So that the Lord will remember our sinnes and iniquities no more, Hebrewes 8. 12. For wee are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. 6. 12. which is the most constant doctrine of that Apostle: It is also sealed unto

unto us by the blood of our Redeemer, in as much as the New Testament of Grace is in force by the death of the Testator. Heb. 9. 16, 17.

But let them take heed of the just charge of Antinomianisme, who when the Law requireth a perfect fulfilling and continuing in all things, Gal. 3. 10. will make it content with lame, imperfect performances; nay, it must accept the will for the deed rather than they will be beholding for a full and free acceptance of Wills and Deeds, and all, unto the beloved of the Lord, in whom the soul of the Lord is well pleased, and the faithfull are freely accepted: Is not this to frustrat, and make void the very end of a Bond, to make it content with some few farthings, when so many thousands were due? Let them also take heed they be not guilty of Antinomianisme, who take and leave, what of the Law they see good; who cut off the curse, the rigor, and all the punishment of it, at one blow. Surely it is not safe to separate what God hath joyned, without good warrant from him: The Apostle affirmeth, that *whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under it*, hee saith not something, but all *whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under it*, so that there is never a curse in the law, which it doth not pronounce upon the head of him that is under it.

And our Saviour himself saith, that *Heaven and earth shall passe away; but one jot or tittle of the Law shall not passe away till all be fulfilled*, Matth. 5. 8. Surely the curses are as much as one jot or tittle; Hee that should deny unto the Lawes of England the power to punish such offenders as are under

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under them, might justly be thought and call'd an enemy to, and a destroyer of the Laws of the Land. But as for us, we make not void the Law through faith, but establish it: We affirme that it remaineth in his full force, and power, not only of commanding; but also of exacting, of terrifying, of cursing, and punishing every Son of *Adam* that is under it, without the abatement of the least jot, or tittle. And whether this be *Antinomianisme* or no, let the Church of *Christ* consider, and judge by the word of *Christ*.

The next imputation cast upon this faithfull Minister of *Christ*, and upon his Doctrine, and hearers was that of *Libertinisme*, whereby if they mean that Doctrine which *Calvin* charges the *Liber-tines* withall, in his book against them; We may most truly say, it never entred into the heart of this Author to embrace it, much lesse into his mouth to publish it: And if any hold, or spread any such horrid assertions, we doe utterly disclaime them, they are none of us: We are as farre, or further from them, then the severest of those that labour to fasten this imputation upon us. But if they mean by *Libertinisme* the preaching of the free grace in *Christ*, (even to them that have no worthynesse to procure it, no goodnesse or dispositions to qualifie them for it) whereby the prisoners are brought out of the prison house, and the captives set at liberty, with that liberty wherewith *Christ* hath made us free, that wee should not be intangled again with the yoke of bondage, *Gal. 5. 1.* which neither wee nor our Fathers were able to beare, *Acts 15. 10.* which in a word is freedome from sinne, which is true liberty not to sin, for then it were slavery,

slavery. If any teachers in Israel call this *Libertinisme*, then are we sorry that they whose chiefe or onely Commission is to preach this Gospel of the Kingdome (which onely bringeth salvation to them and their hearers, if they be saved) to the effecting of this liberty in the consciences of the people, that so they might be helpers of their joy, should so far frustrat the end of the Fathers sending his Son into the world, described, *Luk. 4. 18. 19.* as to cast upon it such vile, reproachfull, and blasphemous aspersions. But as for us, the comfort of this Doctrine is our Crown and portion for ever; for which wee cannot cease but blesse the Lord night and day.

He that saith this Doctrine teacheth licentiousnes, we are sure he is a stranger to it, and never felt the power of it in his own heart: For can any thing else effectually teach to denie all ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, but this grace of GOD appearing? *Tit. 2. 11, 12.* can any man truly finde and prize this pearle of the Kingdome, and not sell all that was of high esteeme with him before? *Mat. 13. 46.* Is there any other reason why we love God, but because hee hath so freely and abundantly loved us first? *1 Joh. 4. 19.* Doth not love manifested as truly, and infallibly kindle love again, as fire kindleth fire? *Cant. 8. 6.* Nay, rather the want of the more full and pure and powerfull preaching of this free grace of Christ, is the very root and ground of the continuance, in all sensuality and profanenes, in those that are notoriously wicked. For what can men doe but catch at shadows and appearances of good, such as honours, and pleasures, and profits, and transgresse for a
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morrell of bread, whilst they know not the glory of their own durable riches and righteousness, whilst the true substance is absent or covered whilst Christ and his benefits are seldome, and coldly, and darkly proposed. It is the true cause also of all unbelief, self-love, and slavish feare in *legall professors*, and of all the evill fruits that spring from these roots of bitterness: For how can they believe, when they do not hear this *free grace* preached, but rather reviled and slandered? How can they cease from self-love, and seeking their own things, whilst they see not how infinitely, how abundantly they are beloved of God their Father in Christ? And how can they be otherwise, but continually infested with slavish fear, when they are kept under the Spirit of Bondage, when they may not dare for fear of presumption, to be assured of Gods *free love*, and joyfully to apply Christ and his benefits unto themselves, from whom alone the Spirit of Adoption cometh, whereby we cry Abba Father? Or if this assurance be allowed, it is upon such hard and high terms, that men must bring so much goodnesse to Christ, before they must dare to partake of him; that if a man will deale faithfully with himselfe, and not make *yes his refuge*, by making himselfe better then he is; he must needs be enforced to renounce all claim unto Christ, and to live in horror and despaire all his dayes. Yea, the chief, or only cause of the weake and inordinate walking of the Professors of the Gospel, is not because they have received the Doctrine of *free Grace*; (as the Divell labours to make men believe) but because they have not received it

it so fully, so freely, and so abundantly, as it is plentifully held forth unto them in the word of the Gospell: In a word, we intreat all those that are possessed with this groundlesse feare, that the preaching of Free Grace opens a way unto licentiousnesse, seriously to consider how contrary the Divine reason of the Apostle. *Rom 6.14* is unto their carnall reason, when he affirmeth that the cause why *unne shall not have dominion over us*; that is, why we shall not runne out into all licentiousnesse, is, *because we are not under the Law, but under grace*: The prudence and wisdom of man thinks quite contrary, that if men be not under the Law, if they be not bridled, restrained, and kept in by the Law, they must needs runne into all uncleannesse with greedinesse: But let God be true and every man a lyer, let the foolishnesse of God be wiser then men. He needs no instructor or Counsellor to teach him how effectually to worke upon men; for *hee knows what is in man*, *Iohn 2.25*.

So much for his Doctrine; His life also was in all things answerable to the honour and credit of the Gospell; notwithstanding all those false and venemous slanders which some have made, and others have loved to heare and disperse; who have just cause to consider that which the Holy Ghost saith, that *without are not only Dogges, and Sorcerers, and Vbore-Mungers, and Idolaters*, but also *whosoever loveth and maketh a lie*, *Revel. 22.15*. For even before he was acquainted with the full purity of the Gospel, whilst hee went on in the ordinary legall way,

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he had an earnest desire and endeavour to glorifie God, both in his life and doctrine, being averse unto, and refusing all worldly pomp, and advancements (whereunto he had an open door by the height of his parentage and friends) which others so unsatiably hunted after, with open mouthes; and wholly dedicating himself to the preaching of the Word, and to a sincere and conscientious practise of the same: So that hee was altogether unblameable in his conversation, without the least tincture of any just imputation of viciousnesse among men: none being more, and few so constant in preaching, in praying, in repeating, in performing publicke, family, and private exercises, in strict observation of the duties of the Lords day. And thus much *concerning his conversation in times past knew all they among whom hee lived, how that in this way he profited above his equalls, (as the Apostle saith of himselfe) being more exceeding zealous, Gal. 1. 13 14.*

And after it pleased God, who had called him by his Grace, to reveale his Sonne in him more clearly; he was so far from abating any part of his zeal of glorifying the Lord, that hee rather doubled it, working now out of a more effectuell principle then the *spirit of bondage and fear* could bee, even the *spirit of power and love, and of a sound minde,* 2 Tim. 1. 7. rejoycing to spend and to be spent, if he might be but serviceable to the meanest of Gods people. So farre was he from pride, vanity, and self-conceitednesse, the very bane of these times, and so full of meeknesse, lowlinesse, and tenderheartednesse; that it appeared manifestly the
Gospel

Gospel of Christ had had a mighty influence, and operation upon him to the casting down of every high thought. Yea, he was so ravished with the love of Christ, and thereby with an earnest, free, and solicitous care of advancing his name, that he seemed to regard nothing besides, preaching the word *freely*, where there could be no expectation of advantage, and in such a way, as in stead of credit, he could look for nothing but revilings and persecution, wherein some proceeded so farre as not to allow him a little learning: a plaine testimony, they have not gone so farre in true mortification and a vile esteem of themselves, as they would have the world beleve. Humane learning is a mean thing for a Minister of the Gospel to boast of. The great Doctor of the Gentiles laid it under his feet, in comparison of the knowledge of Christ, desiring to know among Gods people, *nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified*: Yet was he not in any thing inferiour to the very chiefeft, though in his own esteem hee was nothing. And I doubt not but there is written such a testimony all of his learning in your hearts, as few others can produce; If the holy Ghost by the Prophet *Esay* may be judge of learning, *The Lord God, saith hee, hath given me the tongue of the learned, what is that? That I should know how to speak a word in due season to him that is weary, Isa. 50. 4.* O how many weary spirits did the Lord by his Ministry revive! Surely, if this be *learning*, the Lord gave him no ordinary measure: And indeed his whole life was so innocent and harmlesse from all evill, so zealous and fervent in all goodnesse, that it seems to be set forth

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forth as a manifest practicall argument, to confute the slanders of Satan against the most holy faith which he preached.

So after his naturall strength was insensibly spent in the service of the Lord by such constant and laborious preaching, praying, repeating and studying, oftentimes whole nights, to the impairing and ruining his vitall powers: It pleased the Lord to call him by his last visitation unto his eternall rest: wherein there appeared (both by the whole course of his behaviour in it; but especially by those gracious words, and joyfull exultations which continually proceeded out of his mouth) such faith, such joy, such a quiet and appeased conscience, such triumph over death and hell, as made the slanders by amazed. And withall, he forgot not (considering the cunning of Sathan, and the lying power of darknesse) to professe before some present the stedfastnesse of his Faith to this effect: That as hee had lived in the Free Grace of God through Christ, so hee did with confidence and great joy, even as much as his present condition was capable of, resigne his life and soule into the hands of his most deere Father: And so without the least thought of recanting or renouncing the Doctrine hee had preached (as some have falsly and wickedly spread abroad) after some time, with continuall flowing expressions of joy, he departed this life, into the assured everlasting embraces of his Redeemer: And now gracious Lord, who only art the Author and finisher of our Faith; be pleased more and more to enlighten the eyes, and open the mouthes

To the Christian Reader.

mouthes of all thy Ministers, that they may not
shunne or bee afraid to declare unto thy people
the whole counsell of G O D, even the utter disabi-
lity and nothingnesse of man ; and withall the
freenesse of thy Grace, the plenteousnesse of thy
redemption, and thy salvation, to the uttermost ;
that the hearts of thy people may rejoyce, and
their joy no man may take away from them, Amen.
So prayseth,

The meanest of the


Servants of Christ

ROBERT LANCASTER.



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CHRIST.



SERMON I.

CHRIST

The onely Way.

JOHN 14. Ver. 6.

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life : No man cometh to the Father, but by me.

IN the five and thirty verse of the former Chapter, you shall finde
 I Christ breaking the dolefull, sad
 businesse, which he knew wel would
 go neer to the hearts of his Disciples,
 namely his departure from them. *Little Children,*
yet a little while yee shall seeke mee, but shall not find me.
Peter upon this, asks him whither he goes : he tells
 him, whither he cannot follow him now, but af-
 terwards he shall. Now knowing how sadly this
 went to the hearts of his Disciples, he laboured to
 raise them up, and to establish them against the
 drooping that these sad tidings might occasion;
 and that is in the beginning of this Chapter ; *Let*
not your hearts be troubled. And therein doth endea-
 your to stir up their spirits : first, by telling them
 the expediency of that departure of his ; it was the
 purpose of G O D, that as all things should be
 wrought

wrought effectually by Christ, so the communication of these all things to our spirits, should be by the Spirit of Christ. Now Christ tells them expressly, that except he goes away, the Comforter cannot come to them. He, that must have the dispensing of those things to their spirits, namely the Comforter, cannot come unto them. But secondly, he stayes not here, he encourageth them with another argument; *I go to prepare a place: and he tels them the place where; In my Fathers house are many mansions.* And lest they should suspect, he tells them, *if it were not so, I would have told you.* And because he would not speak in a Cloud of these things, he tels them; *You know whither I goe, and the way yee know.* Now Thomas comes in with an objection; *Wee know not whither thou goest, and how can wee know the way?* Christ answers him in the words of the Text; *I am the way, the truth, and the life; No man comes to the Father, but by me.*

I will not spin out time about the coherence and Analysis of this text: the main point is briefly this:

Doct. Christ is so our Way, that there is no coming to the Father but by him. In the handling of which truth, let me tell you, that I know this Doctrine is generally received, as it is generally delivered; but I fear in the particularising those things that make up the full truth of the Doctrine, every spirit will not, nor cannot receive it, That you may at least see the clear truth in the bowels of this general Doctrine. For, beloved, you must know there is hidden Manna in this very pot: I say, that you may both see it, and tast the sweetness of the truth of it: let us consider: first, in what regard Christ is said to

to be the way to the Father : secondly, what kind of way he is : thirdly, from whence he doth become this way : & fourthly, what use we may make of it.

First, in what sense and regard Christ is said to be our way, that there is no coming to the Father but by him. You all know beloved, that every way, high way, or path way, or what ever it be, necessarily imports two terms, from whence, and whereunto. When a man enters into a way, hee leaves the place where hee was, and goes to the place where he was not. Christ being our way, the phrase imports thus much to us; that by Christ we passe from a state and condition wherein we were, to a state and condition where we were not. The last term is expressed in the text; Hee is the way to the Father. The first term must be implied. To come to him, wee must leave some condition where wee were before : beare a while with the expression, till I open the thing to you.

The state from which Christ is our way to the Father, is twofold : first a state of sin; and secondly a state of wrath. The state whereunto Christ is the way, is indeed expressed here to be the Father, the meaning is, to the grace of the Father, and to the glory of the Father. The summe is this, Christ is so our way, from a state of sin, and wrath, to a state of grace, and glory, that there is no coming from one to the other, but by Christ. And yet wee reason upon generalls, for all this, wee must descend to particulars, that wee may know the fatnesse and narrow of this truth, which indeed hath an inebriating vertue in it, to lay a soul asleep with the admirable sweetnesse and excellencie thereof : No

musick can tickle the eares, as this truth may, when it is truly and thoroughly dived into, no nor tickle the heart neither. Beloved, I must tell you when your soules once finde this reall truth, they cannot chuse but say, *we have found a ransom.* To the particulars therefore, and the opening of them a little.

First of all, Christ is a way from a state of sinfulness; now what myserie is there in this more the ordinary, will you say? beloved it is certainly true, there is nothing of Christ, there is nothing comes from Christ, but it is in a myserie: the Gospel seems to be clear, and so it is to those whose eyes Christ opens; but certainly it is hid to some persons that shall perish. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent of the world, and hast revealed them babes, even so, O Father, because it pleased thee.* But what hiddenesse is yet in this? There is a twofold consideration of sinfulness, from which Christ our way in a speciall manner. There is first that which commonly we call the *guilt* of sinne, which indeed is the *fault*, or a persons being faultie, as he is a transgressor. There is secondly the power or overmasterfulness of sin in persons; Christ is a way from both these, First of all from the *guilt* of sin: Christ is the way from the *guilt* of sin. For a man to be rid of the *guilt* of sin, is briefly no more but this, namely upon triall to be quitted and discharged from the charge of sin that is laid, or may be laid to him, and to be freed from it. This is a person in judgement, to be pronounced a true and an innocent, and a just person, as having no sin

be charged upon him : this is to be free from the guilt of sin. A man is not free from a fault, as long as the fault is laid to his charge; hee is then free from the fault, when it is not charged upon him. All the powers of the world united, are not able to pronounce a person a faultlesse, and an innocent person, but only the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone is the way by which a poore sinner even in this world, may be pronounced an innocent person : even in this world, I say, and acquitted and discharged from the fault and guilt of his sin. It is impossible the Law should doe it : the Apostle speaks it expressly, Rom. 8.2. *The Law of the spirit of life in Christ hath freed me from the Law of sinne and death.* Here it is put upon Christ, to free from the guilt of sin, *For what the Law could not doe, in that it was weake through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likenesse of sinfull flesh for sin, condemned sin in the flesh : the Law, saith the text, could not doe it.* Not that the Law could not pronounce innocents, where innocencie was; not that the Law could not condemn sin where it is condemnable by its authority : the Law can doe this, if it can find subjects whereupon to do it. But the Law runs upon these termes, as it finds a person himself without fault, so it pronounceth sentence upon him : if it finds a fault in his person, then it chargeth this fault upon the person alone, as thus : *Curled is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to doe them : Till then thou canst not be absolutely freed from the acting of a thing in his nature that is faultie, thou canst not heare it speak any otherwise, but of faultinesse, which it chargeth upon thee.*

Much

Much lesse can the heart of man acquit him as an innocent person, or doe away from him that sinfulnessse, namely the guilt of his own sin. If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts. If a man say he hath no sinne, he is a lyar. saith St. John, and the truth is not in him. If the heart should say to any man he is an innocent person, it doth but lie.

If Angels should spend their strength, and should be annihilated, to procure the innocency of a poore sinner; alas their very being is too poore a price, or too mean a valu to take away the sins of the world.

Beloved, to go a little farther in it, it is not mans righteousnessse, the righteousness that man doth act, though assisted by the Spirit of God in the acting of it, that can pronounce him an innocent person, that can be a way to him from his fault and guiltinessse; This you know, that the payment of the last half yeeres rent is no payment for the first half years rent; nor is it amends for the non payment of that which was due before; if that had been paid before, this likewise must be paid now. Suppose a man could perform a righteous action without blame, what satisfaction is this to former transgressions? Nay beloved let me tell you, there is nothing but menstruousnesse as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, in the best of mans righteousnessse, all our righteousnessse is as a menstruous cloth: but as for Christ that blessed Saviour of all that come to God by him, he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him, not onely to save them in respect of glory hereafter: but also to save them in respect of sinfulnessse here, to snatch them as a firebrand out of the fire of their own sin, to deliver them out of their own transgression. Christ I say is the way, and

the absolute and compleat way to rid every soule that comes to God by him, from all filthinesse: so that the person to whom Christ is the way, stands in the sight of God, as having no fault at all in him. Beloved these two are contradictions, for a person to be reckoned a faulty person, and yet that person to be reckoned a just, or an innocent person: if he be faulty he is not innocent; if he be innocent he is not faulty. Now it is the main stream of the whole Gospel, that Christ justifies the ungodly; if he himself justifies him, there is no fault to be cast upon him; mark it well, consider it, as that wherein consists your *Honey*, the life of your soul, and the joy of your spirits; I say it holds forth the Lord Christ as freely tending himself to people, considering people only as ungodly persons receiving him; you have no sooner received him, but you are instantly justified by him; and in this justification you are discharged from all the faults that may be laid to your charge; There is not one sin you commit, after you receive Christ, that God can charge upon your person.

A man would think that there needs not much time to be spent to clear such a truth as this is, being so currantly carried along by the whole stream of the Gospel. But beloved, because I know tender hearts stumble much at it, give me leave to clear it unto you by manifest Scripture, such as are written in such great Letters as he that runs may read them; observe that in the 51 Psalm, *wash mee, faith David, What then? I shall be whiter then Snow. Snow* you know hath no spot at all, no fault, no blemish. *David* shall be lesse blameable, have lesse

faultinesse, have lesse spottednesse in him then is in the very snow it self. At the seventh verse of the fourth of the Canticles, you shall find Christ speaking, one would thinke, strange language to his Church, admirable language indeed : *Thou art faire my love*, saith Christ, *thou hast no spot in thee at all*. I do but cite the very words of the text, therefore let none cavill, lest they be found fighters against God, *hee hath no spot in her*. In the 53. of *Isaiah*, where hee speaks admirably concerning the effectualnesse of Christs death, he tells us that *the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all*; thy iniquities, my iniquities, as our forefathers iniquities, so shall it extend to our posterities iniquities; The iniquities of us all the Lord hath laid upon Christ; They cannot lie upon Christ, and upon us too : If they be reckoned to the charge of Christ, they are not reckoned to the charge of the person that doth receive this Christ : But *the Lord laid them upon him*, saith the text there; And what iniquity ? Doth hee lay upon him some iniquity, and leave some iniquity to us ? Look into the 36. of *Ezekiel* and the 5. vers. you shall there see the extent of iniquities that God hath laid upon Christ, that hee takes away from the sinner, I meane the sinner justified by Christ that received him : There you have the covenant largely repeated, the new covenant; not according to the covenant God made with our fathers. And the first beginning, the first words of the covenant are these, *I will sprinkle you with cleane water, and you shall be cleansed from your filthinesse, and from all your Idolls will I cleanse you; from all your filthinesse, small sins as some will call them, great sins, turbulent*

lent sins, scandalous sins, any sins, any filthinesse; I will cleanse you from all your filthinesse, and from all your Idolls; look *Ezekiel 16. 7.* a notable Chapter indeed, setting open the unsearchable riches of the love of Christ to men: *I found thee polluted in thy blood*, saith he, *such blood that no eye could pity thee, or do any good to thee*: Well, no creature doth pity him, was it so with God? No, *When I saw thee polluted in thy blood, I said unto thee live: yea when I saw thee polluted in thy blood I said unto thee live, when I passed by thee thy time was the time of love*, saith God, *I spread my skirt over thee*; mark I pray you, not a scanty skirt to cover some of this blood, and filth, but a broad skirt, a white rayment, as Christ calls it himselfe, as he speaks to the Church in the Revelation, *I counsell thee to put off the white raiment, that thy nakednesse may not appeare*. It seems there is such a covering of Christ that he casts upon a person while he is considered in his blood that covers his nakednes that none of it doth appear, and yet a little further in *Ezekiel 16.* then was she dyed deep in water after a believer is in covenant, *yea I thoroughly washed away thy blood* And this was added that no man might have a cavill; It is true, God casts a covering over our sinfulness, but it is our sinfulness still, it is but covered; Nay saith the Lord, *I have washed it away, then washed I thee with water*.

Object. But you will say, these are obscure texts and mysticall; a man cannot build upon these, that faultinesse is not reckoned to believers, being taken off by Christ.

Ans. To come therefore to a clearer manifestation of the Gospel by a more clear light, marke what the

the Apostle saith, (Ephes. 5. 25. Christ doth there purge and sanctifie his Church, that he might present it to himselfe not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it may bee holy and without blame; saith the Text, and the words run in the present tense; Not that in glory only, we shal be without spot; but now, even now we shal be without blemish, we shall be without spot, and wrinkle; and that he might now present us to himselfe. So in 2 Cor. 5. 21, you shal see the truth spoken more emphatically, then yet I have delivered to you; The Apostle runs in a mighty strain in this busines: *He was made sinne for us, that wee might be made the righteousnesse of God in him*: Both termes are expressed in the abstract: He was made sin for us; here you see plainly, our sins are so translated to Christ, that God doth reckon Christ the very sinner, nay God doth reckon all our sins to be his sins, and makes him to be sin for us; and what is the fruit of this? We are thereby made the righteousness of God in him. If we be righteousness, where is our sinfulness to be charged upon us? In 1 John 1. 7 he tells us there expressly, *that the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sinne*; the blood of Christ doth cleanse us, he doth not say the blood of Christ shall cleanse us from all sin; but he saith for the present time, the blood of Christ doth cleanse us from all sin. John the Baptiste hath this expression, *Behold the Lambe of God that taketh away the finnes of the world*; he takes them away: How doth he take them away and yet leave them behind, and yet charge them upon the person that doth believe? The person must be discharged, or else how can they be taken away? This is the main thing imported in that notable Sacrifice of the

scape-goat, *Levis. 16. 21.* the high Priest must lay his hand upon the head of the goat to be carryed away into the wildernesse, the text saith, it was the laying the sins of the people, and that when they were laid upon him he goes into the wildernesse: He goes not into the wildernesse, and leaves their sins behind him; then the end of this service were frustrated, for he was to carry them away that were laid upon him: So Christ as the scape-goat hath our sinnes laid upon his back, and hee carries them away: and therefore *Psal. 103. 12.* it is said that *God removes our sins from us as farre as the East is from the West: He casts our sins into the bottom of the Sea.* Besides all these Texts of Scripture, I might produce multitudes more, if need were, to this purpose; but I thinke there can be nothing in the world more cleere then this truth, that Christ is such a way to a poor receiving soule that he hath received that he might take and carry away all the sins of such a person, that he is no longer reckoned as having sins upon him.

Object. But some will object, Doe not those that receive Christ, actually commit sinne?

Ans. I answer, Yea, they doe commit sinne, and the truth is, themselves can doe nothing but commit sinne. If a person that is a believer hath any thing in the world, he hath received that, if hee doth any thing that is good, it is the Spirit of God that doth it, not hee, therefore he himself doth nothing but sinne, his soul is a mint of sinne. But then you will say, If he doth sin, must not God charge it where it is? Must not he be reckoned to bee a sinner, while he doth sin? I answer no, though hee doth

doth sin, yet he is not to be reckoned a sinner; but his sins are reckoned to be taken away from him. A man borrows a hundred pounds, some man will say, doth not he owe this hundred pounds, seeing he borrowed it? I say no, in case another hath paid the hundred pounds for him. A man doth sin against God, God reckons not his sinne to bee his, he reckons it Christs, therefore hee cannot reckon it his. If the Lord did lay the iniquity of men upon Christ, as I said before, then how can hee lay it upon their persons? Thou hast sinned, Christ takes it off, supposing I say, thou hast received Christ. And as God doth reckon sin to Christ, and charges sin upon him, so if thou be of the same minde with God, thou must also reckon this sin of thine upon Christ, his back hath born it, hee hath carried it away.

For my part, I cannot see what every person will object, I will endeavour to make this truth cleare as the day to you. Doe but consider with your selves, what came Christ into the world for, if not to take away the sins of the world, hee need never to have died; but to take away the sins of the world. Did he come to take them away, and did hee leave them behind him? Then hee lost his labour. Did hee not leave them behinde him? then his person is discharged of them from whom he hath taken them: But if the person bee not discharged of them, he is not a justified person in himselfe, neither can you account his person justified, as long as you account his sinne upon his person. It is a contradiction for a man to say, that a man is innocent, and yet nocent. Beloved,
then

then here is a point of strange ravishing usefulness to souls that can but draw towards it, and receive it: all the difficulty lies whether it be my portion or thy portion, whether I may say, *Christ is my way*, thus from this guilt, that there can be none of this charged upon me. I say, if thou doest receive Christ, it shouldst but set footing into this way Christ, as soon as ever thou art stept into this way, thou art stept out of the condition thou wast in. *Mens recurring of Christ*, what is that will you say? Of this subject I have spoken largely heretofore. I will not spend time to run over the heads again: To receive him, is but to come to him, *Hee that comes to me, I will in no wise cast off*: Mark, many think there is such a kind of sinfulness that is a bar to them, that though they would have Christ, yet there is not a way open for them to take him: Beloved, there is no way of sinfulness to barre thee from comming to Christ, if thou hast a heart to come to him, and against all objections, to venture thy self with joy into the bosome of Christ for the discharge of all thy sinfulness. Christ himself (which I tremble to expresse, though it be with indignation) hee should be a lyer if thou come unto him, and yet bee cast off: *Every one that will come, saith hee, let him come and drinke of the water of life freely*. You shall find, beloved, the great complaint of Christ thus, *Hee came to his owne, and his owne received him not*. And to the Scribes and Pharisees, *Yee will not come to mee that ye might have life*. The truth is, beloved, men dote upon the establishing of a righteousness of their owne, to bring them to Christ, and it is but pre-

presumptuous or licentious doctrine, that Christ may be their Christ, and they receive him, and they considered simply ungodly, as enemies: But beloved, they are abominably injurious to the Faith of Jesus Christ, to the exceeding bounty of that grace of his, who saves from sin without respect of any thing in the creature, that hee himself might have the praise of the glory of his grace. The covenant, beloved, concerning the blotting out of transgression, is a free covenant; *Not for thy sake doe I this, bee it knowne to thee, saith the Lord, for thou art a stubborne and stiffe-necked people; but for my owne sake doe I this.* Looke therefore upon this: All this grace to acquit thy soule here and hereafter, comes out of the bowells of God himself; and hee hath no other motive in the world, but simply and onely his owne bowels, that put him upon the delivery of a poor wretch from iniquity, and discharge of sin, from that load which otherwise would grind and crush him to powder: I say his owne bowels are the motive. God neither looks to any thing in the creature to win him to shew kindnesse, nor yet any thing in the creature to debarre him: neither righteousness in men that perswades God to pardon sinne, nor unrighteousnesse in men that hinders him from giving this pardon, and acquitting them from their transgressions; it is only and simply for his owne sake hee doth it unto men. Thus you have seen the first particular, that I have endeavoured to cleare from all cavills and objections that may bee laid upon it.

In one word beloved mistake me not, I am far from

from imagining any believer is freed from acts of sin, he is freed only from the charge of sin, that is, from being a subject to be charged with sin; All his sins are charged upon Christ, he being sin for him: yet Christ is not an actual sinner, but Christ is all the sinners in the World by imputation; And through this imputation all our sins are so done away from us, that we stand as Christs own person did stand, and doth stand in the sight of God. Now, had not Christ made a full satisfaction to the Father, he himselfe must have perished under those sins that he did beare: But in that he went through the thing, and paid the full price, as he carried them away from us; so he laid them down from himselfe. So that now Christ is freed from sin, and we are freed from sin in him; he was freed from sin, imputed unto him and laid upon him when he suffered: We were freed from sin as he takes it off from our shoulders, and hath carried it away: *Come unto mee all ye that are weary and heavily laden: that is, with sin, Mat. 11. saith Christ: and what will follow? and I will give you rest.* As long as the burthen is upon the shoulders, so long there is no rest. Therefore this doth necessarily import, that Christ must take away the burthens, that we may have rest.

Secondly, Christ is not only the way from the fault of sin, that by him every believing soule is fully discharged of that; but he is the way also from the power of sin. There is a threefold power of sin; there is first a reigning power; and secondly, a tyrannizing power; and thirdly, a bustling or ruffling power of sin, and they are all three

of them distinct; Christ is a way from all these sorts of sins in believers. From the reigning power of it; so the Apostle speaks expressly, *Romans 6.14. Sin shall not have dominion over you, saith he, for you are not under the Law, but under Grace, Grace, there is Christ himselfe, His servants yee are to whom yee obey, whether of sinne unto death, or of righteoussesse unto life; but thanks be to God, saith he, yee have obeyed the truth.* The meaning is this, While we are under the Law, and have no better help, sin reignes in us, the Law cannot bridle it in; but when we come under grace by Christ, the dominion of the Law, or rather the dominion of Sin, which the Law cannot restrain in us, that is captivated and subjected by Christ: *I will subdue your iniquities,* as it is spoken by the Prophet *Micah*: we are discharged from the fault and guilt of sin, that is, absolute at once, but the discharge from the reigning power of sin, that is done by degrees; the faultinesse of sin is left behing the back of the believer, but the power and the resistency of sin, lies all along in the way; but still Christ breaks through, and makes passage, *1 Cor. 10.13.* Where you have this admirable expression; *No temptation hath hapned unto you, but such as is common to men; God is faithfull and will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able: but will with the temptation make a way that you may be able to beare it.*

There is a tyrannizing power of sin, that is not when sin is chosen of the soul, as that under which the soul, both affects, and will live; but when sin hath gotten a present overmastery in the soul, and in spite of all the spirit can do, will keep it under.

This

This I say, is the tyranny of sinne; and this was the case of the Apostle Paul Rom. 7. *When I would doe good, evil is present with me: I finde a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, leading me captive to the law of sin: so that the good I would doe, I doe not; and the evil that I would not, that doe I.* In regard of which he makes a bitter complaint: But marke the event of all, neere the latter end of the chapter, *But thanks be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Here you see that though sin hath a tyranny over the spirit of a person, yet through the Lord Jesus Christ this tyranny is abated.

Yet thirdly, it is abated by degrees, for the bustling power of sinne, namely, though it cannot be entertained, yet it will be troublesome to the soule. Now Christ is the way by degrees also from this trouble of sinne: For by degrees he doth crucifie the flesh with the affections and lust thereof, and brings downe the power by treading down Satan, that is, the egger on of sinne, to make it so troublesome by overcoming the world, that administers occasion of this troublesomenesse: *Feare not, saith Christ, I have overcome the world:* But still, I say, hee doth this by degrees, and so he doth it by degrees, that sometimes he lets the worke be at a stand, and sometimes the tyranny shall be over the spirits, and the spirit shall be under that tyranny a good while: Sometimes the Spirit shall be under the troublesomenesse of sinne, and be constantly exercised with this troublesomenesse. But you must know that it is neither the tyranny, nor the troublesomenesse of sinne in a beleever, that doth eclipse the beauty of Christ, or the fa-

your of God to the soule. Our standing is not founded upon the subduing of our sinnes, but upon that foundation that never failes, and that is Christ himselfe, upon his faithfulnessse and truth. Men thinke they are consumed when they are troubled with sinne: Why? because of their transgression. But marke what the Lord saith, *I the Lord change not, therefore ye sonnes of Jacob are not consumed.* It is not you change not, therefore ye are not consumed; but, I change not: I have loved you freely, I will love you freely, I cannot alter. *Whom he loves he loves unto the end*; it is in respect of his unchangeableness.

Though there be ebbings and flowings of the outward man, nay of the inward man in the businesse of sanctification, yet this is certaine true, *That believers are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation.* They are kept in holinessse, sincerity, simplicity of heart; but all this hath nothing to doe with the peace of his soule, and the salvation and justification thereof. Christ is hee that justifies the ungodly: Christ is hee that saves the soule: Christ is hee that is the peace-maker: and as Christ is this peace-maker, so all this peace depends upon Christ alone. Beloved, if you will fetch your peace from any thing in the world but Christ, you will fetch it from where it is not. *This people* (saith the Prophet Jeremy,) *bath committed two evils. What are they? They have forsaken me the fountaine of living waters, and have digged to themselves pits and cisterns that will hold no water.*

What is that fountaine of living waters? Christ

is the fountaine of peace and life : and men forsake that peace that is to be had in Christ, when they would have peace out of righteousness of their owne, out of their great enlargements, out of humiliations. These are broken cisternes, and what peace is there in them ? Is there not sinfulness in them ? who can say, I have washed my hands ? If there be sinfulness in them, where then is their peace ? Sinne speaks nothing but warre to the soule ; let me tell you, beloved, you that looke after peace, from the subduing of your sinnes : what peace can it afford unto you, in case there be any defects of subduing of your sinnes ? there can be no peace.

Suppose God had nothing in the world to charge upon you, but onely that sinfulness in the very subduing of your corruptions, what peace could you have ? what could not God finde in us ? Suppose your eyes were enlightned to see your selves, how much filthinesse there is in all your wrastlings ; I say, how much defects and infirmities might you see ? Could you choose but fall foule upon your owne spirits for these infirmities and defects of your best performances, seeing the wages of sinne is death ? Is there any sinne in any thing you doe, the wages whereof is death ? What can you runne to then ? *None but Christ.* *None but Christ* : While your acts in respect of filthinesse, proclaimes nothing but warre, Christ alone and his blood, proclaimes nothing but peace : Therefore I give this hint by the way, when as I speake of the power of Christ subduing sin, because from the power of it in men, they are

too apt to thinke their peace depends upon this subduing of sin. If their sins be subdued, then they may have peace, and if they cannot bee subdued, then no peace, fetch peace where it is to bee had : Let subduing of sin alone for peace ; let *Christ* have that which is his due ; it is hee alone that speakes peace. It remaines we should speake further, that as *Christ* is a way from sin, both in respect of fault and power; so hee is a way from wrath, and he is a way to the grace and glory of the Father, and what kind of way hee is. But the searching into every corner of this truth for the sifting of it, hath brought mee exceedingly backe beyond my expectation. I shall have further occasion in the afternoone to speake of it.



SERMON II.

John 14. 6.

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, &c.

NOW wee goe on ; *Christ* as he is the way from sinne, so he is the way from wrath: And indeed must bee the way from wrath, when he is the way from sinne: Wrath is but the wages of sinne; the effect wrought by sinne ; take away the cause, and the effect dies ; destroy the root, and the branches wither of themselves. Mans sinne is the root of wrath; when sinne is destroyed and abolished, wrath must needs sinke and perish. *Christ* is so the way from wrath, that all that receive *Christ* are wholly discharged, both from

from Gods affection of wrath, as I may so speake, and from the effects of that affection of his: wrath is considered in these two respects: First, simply, as the displeasure it selfe of God, the offence that God takes. Secondly, in the fruits of this offence, that hee manifests in the expression of his indignation and displeasure. *Christ is the way*, the only way, the effectual and infallible way, from all this wrath, to all that do receive him.

First, from the affection it selfe of wrath; let mee tell you, beloved, (I would to God you could receive it according to the manifest evidence of Scripture) God doth no longer stand offended nor displeased; though a beleever after hee bee a beleever, doth sinne often; yet I say God no longer stands offended and displeased with him, when hee hath once received *Christ*: and unto them, God saith, *Anger is not in mee*, *Esay 27. 4.* And in the 53 of *Esay* amongst many other notable expressions of Gods being well pleased towards poore sinners through Christ, he saith, *He was wounded for their transgressions*; you have this admirable expression of the effect of his wounding, *he shall see of the travell of his soule*, that is, towards the latter end of the Chapter, *and he shall be satisfied: Satisfied*, here is as much as *pacified*, they are all one. The travell of the soule of Christ makes God such amends for sinfulness of all believers, that he can no longer stand offended and displeased with them. If God doth remaine offended with them, there is yet some of their sinfulness remaining to be taken away, that this offence also may be taken away; all their sins must be taken away from them, and all offences

will be removed from them. But except God will be offended, where there is no cause to be offended (which is blasphemy to speake) he will not be offended with believers. For I say, he hath no cause to be offended with a beleever, because he doth not find the sinne of the beleever to be the beleevers owne sin, but he finds it the sin of Christ, *He was made sin for us, God laid the iniquities of us all upon him: The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sinne: He bare our sinnes in his owne body on the tree: And if he beare our sinnes, he must beare the displeasure for them: Nay, he did beare the displeasure, the indignation of the Lord; And if he did beare the indignation of the Lord, either he did beare all, or but part: If he did not beare all the indignation of the Lord, then he doth not* *(save to the utmost, those that come to God by him: as in the fourth chapter to the Hebrews, he is said to doe; I say, not to the uttermost, because here is some offence, some indignation left behind; and for lacke of taking off this indignation upon himselfe, it lights and fals upon beleevers. So that, either you must say, Christ is an imperfect Saviour, and hath left some scattering of wrath behind, that will light upon the head of the beleever: or else you will say, he is a perfect Saviour and takes away all displeasure of God: then there remains none of it upon the person of a beleever. Beloved, for my part I understand not what clouds are in the mind, and judgement of other men: To me it seemes, there is no truth more abundantly cleared, in all the Scripture, then this one truth of the transacting of our sinnes, and consequently the offence of God for this sinne, that it is wholly laid*
upon

upon the back of Christ, and so a poore soule hath rest from the indignation of God; as Christ doth take the burthen off from his shoulders. There is a twofold burthen, first in sin it selfe: and the second burthen is the indignation of God for it. Who can beare this indignation of his? Christ alone, and he hath borne it.

Obj. 1. I, but you will say to me, is not God displeased and offended at the sins of beleevers, when they do commit them; hath Christ taken away the offence against sin by his death?

Ans. No, therefore do not mistake your selfe, there may be easily a mistake for lacke of serious pondering the words I deliver. I have not said, God is not offended with the sinnes that beleevers commit: but God stands not offended with the persons of beleevers, for the sinnes committed by them: He hath that everlasting indignation against sin as ever. And as there is the same contrariety in sin against his nature; so, there is the same contrariety in Gods nature unto sinne. All contrarieties have a mutuall contrariety against each other: As water is contrary to fire, so fire is contrary to water: As sin is contrary to the nature of God, so the nature of God is contrary to sin: so there is an abhorrency of God to that sinfulnessse, but not an offence in God to the person too, that commits that sin: Because the offence of God for that sin doth spend it selfe upon the person of Christ, and by spending it selfe upon the person of Christ, there remains none of it to light upon the person of a beleever, Christ having borne all this offence for sinne. And therefore as I said before, either grant

Christ doth satisfie the Father, that he is pleased in his beloved Son, according to Christs own speech, either grant this, or say Christ hath not done all. In *Matth 3* towards the last verse, is heard a voyce from heaven at the baptizing of Christ, saying, *This is my beloved Sonne in whom I am well pleased* : Hee doth not say, *with whom I am well pleased*, but *in whom I am well pleased* ; that is, in whom I am well pleased with you. Though in our natures, and in the sinfulness of them, there is matter of displeasure, yet in Christ for all this, God is well pleased with us. And yet there is none of Gods indignation against sinne lost in all this ; because hee is not offended at all with the beleever : For hee hath satisfied his owne offence in his Sonne more fully then hee would have satisfied it in our owne persons ; wee must have beene everlastingly suffering before God would have beene fully satisfied. Now therefore as the payment of a great sum all at one payment and at a day, is a better payment then by a peny a yeare, till a thousand yeares be out : Marke what I say ; so Christs satisfying the Father at once, by one sacrifice himselfe, is a better satisfying of him, then if wee should have beene infinite dayes in paying that which his justice requires, and his indignation to sinne doth expect. So here is no derogation to the loathsome nature of sinne, and the purity of God, and the great offence God takes at sinne ; but onely here is the transaction of it from the person of a beleever, to the person of Christ himselfe, that willingly tooke this upon him : and not onely willingly did he take it upon him, but it was according to the determinate

determinate counsell and purpose of God that hee should doe it: nay the pleasure of God, *it pleased the Father to bruite him*, as in the latter end of *Esay 53*. So much briefly for the affection of wrath, and how Christ is a way to take away that affection of Gods wrath, that is wrath simply, as it is an offence from him to a beleever.

Secondly, Christ is a way to take away the effect of Gods displeasure, Christ is the only way to take it away. *shall I give the fruit of my body*, saith the Prophet, *Micah 6 7. for the sinne of my soule? a thousand rams, or tenthousand rivers of oyle?* No, alas, this will not buy out the penance of one sinne, when he hath sinned, it is all too mean a price: there must bee a better to take away that wrath, that is, the heavy punishment of God from a beleever. I say a better price then this, not a deerer price to us poore men, but yet a more deere and acceptable price unto God, a price in its nature infinite and invaluable: but of this price not a farthing goes out of our purse, there is the greatnesse. *Christ is a way* to take away all wrath in respect of the heavy hand of God, which is the fruit of mans sinne.

In briebe, beloved, the sum plainly is this, *Christ is so the way from wrath*, that God doth never punish any beleever, after he is a beleever, for sinne. I say, God doth not punish him for sinne. This seemes to bee a harsh proposition to many, but give mee leave to cleare what I say, and so according to the cleare evidence of truth, reject or receive what I deliver to you. In *Isa. p 53. 5.* a chapter of most admirable excellency to set forth the wonderfull incomprehensible benefit of *Christ*, observe it, *Hee was wounded for*

our transgressions ; marke the punishment : He was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon him ; and by his stripes we are healed. Now beloved, I will aske but this question ; Are the wounds of Christ part onely of our punishment ? Or are they the whole of our punishment ? The bruising of Christ, were they to be part of the punishment, our sins deserved ? If they were but part, we must beare the rest our selves ; but then, we must be co-saviours with Christ, co-bearers of indignation and wrath. In the 63 of *Esay* 3, He hath trodden the *Win.-presse* alone, saith the Text ; He looked for some that might helpe, and wondred, and there was none, *vers. 3.* No creature in the world was able to be a helper with him.

I speake of believers only, they do not beare one lash of that deserved wrath, that is poured out for sinne, not one lash or stroak ; Christ trod it alone himselve. Yea, but you will say unto me, doth not God afflict his children and beleevers, all the world seeth and knoweth he doth ; therefore why speake you against this ? Beloved, give me leave to aske you, is there not a great deale of difference between Gods afflicting of beleevers, and punishing of beleevers for sin.

Quest. I, but are not the afflictions of beleevers for their sins ?

Ans. I answer, No afflictions are unto beleevers from sin, but not for sin. What is the meaning of that, will you say ? This, God in afflicting of beleevers, doth not intend to punish them, as now laying on them the desert of his sin, for that is laid upon Christ ; but he doth afflict them in part

to be a helpe to preserve them from sin. I say, all afflictions to believers are to keepe them from sin, rather then punishment unto them for sinne. Yet some will say, No men in the world are afflicted, but their afflictions are for sin; I answer, yea, there are that have been: The Disciples put a question to Christ, when the man was borne blind: *Whether did this man sinne, or his parents, that he was borne blind?* Saith Christ to them, *neither he, nor his parents:* not that neither of them had sinned, but that neither he, nor his parents had any sinne, as a cause of that affliction or tryall upon him; but that the power of GOD might be seene in him: So GOD afflicting a beleever, hath no respect unto sinne, as if he did afflict for sinne. For my owne part, I cannot see, how a man can say Christ bore all the punishment of sinne, if we beare any of it ourselves. And if Christ did not beare it all, I cannot see how Christ can be a sufficient Saviour without some other to helpe him out, in that which he himselfe did not beare. I speake all this, beloved, the rather because when poore beleivers are crossed and afflicted in any kind, they are presently ready to suspect, GOD hath cast them off for their sinnes, and that GOD is angry with them for sinning against him. I say, in respect of sinne he hath committed, which he thus suspects, there is not the least drop of the displeasure of GOD, nor the fruit of such displeasure comes neere him. But every tongue shall be made dumb, and batten, saith the LORD; GOD seeth that afflictions will purge, therefore he gives them. The father gives not his childe a purge to make him

him sicke, but to take away some bad humours that
 make him sicke, and for the prevention of diseases
 or for the removall of some disease : that is the fa-
 thers end in purging the child. And this is the end
 why God afflicts his people, not for their sins, but
 to take them away, that is, to prevent the hastinesse
 and inconsideratenesse of a beleever, that hee may
 not bee so rash, running head-strong in his own
 wayes, but may bee the more considerate for the fu-
 ture time to come. It is most certainly true, beloved, that
 as soone as ever a person is a beleever, hee is so in-
 corporated into God, and with him, that there is no
 thing in the world from that instant, unto a beleever,
 but mercy. God managing his mercy in his owne
 way for the best to his, sometimes by the rod
 as well as by sweet meates: but still he runs in a way
 of mercy. *All things shall worke together for good*, this is
 Gods way to beleivers. And if this could but be re-
 ceived of them, and that even then when they are
 gold cast into the fire, that God all that time they are
 in the fire, as the Prophet *Malachi* speaks, sits as a
 refiner, then they would bee more quiet in the expec-
 tation of that purity in which they shall come forth,
 when the time of their coming forth is grace.
 When you see the refiner cast his gold into the furnace,
 doe you thinke he is angry with the gold, and that
 he meanes to cast it away? No he sits as a refiner, that is
 Christ. Hee stands warily over the fire, and over the gold
 and lookes unto it, that not one graine bee lost: and
 when the drosse is severed, hee will out with it presently,
 it shall bee no longer there. Even so doe
 Christ sit as a refiner, when once his gold shall have
 his drosse severed, then he takes out his gold, and
 becomes

becomes as gold seven times purified in the fire. But still, I say, as a fruit of wrath, God doth never punish, or afflict, or chastise (which word you may rather use, because it is the ordinary phrase of the Gospell) Every Sonne I love, I rebuke and chasten.

In briefe, *Christ* is the way from wrath, not onely in respect of the present, but also in respect of the future : I meane, a way from everlasting damnation. Give me a beleever that hath set his footing truly in *Christ*, and hee blasphemeth *Christ* that dares serve a writ of damnation upon that person. Suppose a beleever be overtaken in a grosse sin, it is a desperate thing in any man so much as to serve a writ of damnation upon this believer : It is absolutely to frustrate, and make void the Mediatorship and Satisfaction of *Christ* to say any beleever, (though he be fallen by infirmity) is in the estate of damnation. And I say unto thee, thy selfe who ever thou art, thou that art ready to charge damnation upon thy selfe, when thou art overtaken, thou doest the greatest injury to the Lord Iesus *Christ* that can be : For thou directly overthrowest the fulnesse of the grace of *Christ*, and the fulnesse of the satisfaction of *Christ* to the Father. Art thou a beleever, and yet art thou in danger of damnation ? Wherefore hath *Christ* suffered ? Hath he died in vaine ? If hee hath not died in vaine, but hath borne thy damnation, how shall hee poure forth this damnation upon thee againe, unlesse he be unjust, which is blasphemy do to speake ?

Object. But you will say unto mee, This is presumption, then may a man goe on, and doe what he

he list, there is no feare of damnation. This is the way to take the bridle from men, and make them kicke up their heeles as the wild Asses upon the Mountaines.

n/w. It is true, were a man to be guided by himselfe, and to order his owne way according to the pleasure of his owne will. But beloved, you must know, that the same Christ that hath borne the wrath of the Father, and the effects thereof doth free poore sinners from damnation, the same Christ doth take as strict an order, to restraine and keepe in the spirits of a man, as to save that man Beloved, although a wilde Ass upon the Mountaines being loose, runnes at randome, yet this Ass may be taken, and so tamed, that he may be as loose as he was before; yet he will not runne unrulily as he did before, by vertue of that taming that is upon him. It is true, our nature themselves are mad, and if they had the raine would runne wilde, but you must know that Christ breakes this wildnesse, and then he dare let a believer loose to that, in respect of which an unbeliever, a wicked man, would take advantage to sinne. In the 31. of Jerem. 18, 19. ver. here the Lord discourseth of Ephraim, *I have heard Ephraim bemoaning of himselfe;* Thus, *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised as a Bullocke unaccustomed to the yoke.* Here a wild Bull, an unruly creature: you may be sure Ephraim was thus, God hampers Ephraim well enough for all this, *Convert thou me, and I shall be converted,* so after I was converted, I was ashamed, I smote upon my thigh, *I was ashamed and confounded within my selfe.* Marke you I pray, now let Ephraim loose; alas

Ephraim

Ephraim is ashamed, Ephraim would blush to looke after that which he was mad after before, he is confounded within himselfe, he cannot tell which way to stir now, as before, Christ doth breake the spirits of him, so that there is not now that licentiousnesse in him through the power of Christ, which was naturally in him, till the power of Christ came upon him.

Object. Why must not hell and damnation be a bridle to keep men in, will you say?

Answer. Marke what the Psalmist speaks, Psal. 110.
 3. *Thy people shall be a willing people* Here you see how tame the people of God, the people of Christ are, thy people are a willing people: how so, by feare of damnation? No such thing, but in the day of thy power, and in the beauty of holinesse, they shall be a willing people: First, the power of Christ comes over a person that frames his spirit to a willingness and aptnesse; then comes the beauty of holinesse, that wins, perswades, allures, and drawes them to a willingness: and where there is a willing spirit to walke with Christ, there is no danger of taking liberty. The Philosophers observe a rule, that the will is not compelled, a man cannot constraine his will; let the will of a person but be to the pleasure of Christ, nothing can constraine him to goe beyond Christ: he may haply be over-reached, and be over-taken, but he will never breake loose, he will never runne away, though the gate stand open on every side. The grasse and pasture is so sweet that Christ hath put a beleever into, that though there be no bounds to keepe in such a soule, yet it will never goe out of this fat pasture

pasture to feed in a barren common: Therefore in answer of the objectors, who naturally thinke there is a way opened to such licentiousnesse, by taking away all wrath from a beleever, and that therefore he will breake forth into all manner of excesse, I tell you the power of Christ restraines him: Thus I have dispatched the second thing, from whence Christ is the way: he is the way from sin & wrath, wrath in the affection, wrath in the effects of it.

2 I come now in the next place to consider, how Christ is the way, not onely from sin and wrath, but that he is the way, and the onely way to grace and glory: Grace in Scripture admires of a double acception, proper and improper. We usually take grace for that which is improperly grace: For we commonly call grace those divine qualities, and vertues and holy dispositions, and actions, where with we are possessed, by which we doe improve and imploy our selves in the world. This we usually call grace, and in some sense it is grace: But that which is most properly grace, is nothing else but meerely favour and bounty, and loving kindnesse it selfe: And so consequently all sanctification is not so properly grace it selfe, as the fruit of grace; God first casts his favour and loving kindnesse upon a person, then out of this favour flowes the severall fruits of his loving kindnesse; and the fruits are those fruits of the spirit frequently mentioned by the Apostle. Now Christ is a way to grace in both these respects; Christ is a way to favour and loving kindnesse in God; Christ is a way to all fruits or graces as you call them.

He is a way to loving kindnesse it selfe, and the
favour

favour of God : This loving kindnesse and favour of God consists in these branches ; first in a willing reconciliation of God , unto an alienated creature : a person is then said to be received unto grace, when he hath been cast off, and forbidden to come near; as when Princes cast men out of their favour, they confine them and remove them from them, that they shall not be neere the Court : Now when Princes are pleased to cast a fresh aspect upon those persons againe, and so call them to Court, and to be friends with them, this is properly grace : so beloved , after God se ms to cast off a person, and to put him farre off from himself , and to remove him out of his sight , to confine him from coming near him ; when he will returne to him again, and will shew him the light of his countenance that he did formerly hide, this is properly favour. The Apostle you shall finde, doth expressly mention this reconciliation of God , and ascribes this grace meerly unto Christ alone, *Ye who were sometimes a farre off* , mark but the expression, *hath beene made nigh by the blood of Christ* ; here you see the initiating reconciliation by the blood of Christ. *God was in Christ* , saith the Apostle, *reconciling the world unto himselfe* , not imputing their tre'pases unto them. In Christ reconciling, and therefore, *Christ is the mediator of a better covenant*, (as the Apostle expresseth, Heb. 8.) Nay the Apostle tells us expressly, he is the onely Mediator, and there is no other to concile men to G O D but Christ alone ; *there is but one Mediator between God and man*, the CH R I S T J E S U S : So we see plainly, to be at peace with G O D , there must be only

the Lord Jesus Christ that must make peace : He himself is the way. I remember a passage of *Job*, when there seemed to be a variance between God and him : first *Job* was at a pittifull stand, *I cannot answer him* (saith *Job*, speaking of God) why so ? *There is no dayes-man that may come in between us, that might lay his hand upon us both* : as much as to say, there is no hope of agreement with God, till another interpose himself, and be a dayes-man, that is, hath power over us both ; Such effectuall umpires between men are indifferent, and have both parties in difference in their power to command the one, and the other ; to command the creditor to yeild, and to prevaile with the debtor to pay as much as he is able : and this umpire is Christ alone.

There are many other expressions of Gods grace of his loving kindnesse and favour, I mean in Scripture ; and it is plain throughout the whole Scripture, that Christ is the only way to all ; first, to that adoption that the Apostle, *1 John. 1.* speaks of, when he breaks out into admiration saying, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath shewed unto us, that we should be called the Sonnes of God*. Is it a small matter to you (saith David, speaking of some of the servants of *Saul*, perswading him to marry the Kings daughter) *seemeth it a small matter in your eyes to be the Kings son in Law ?* So say I to you ; Is it a small matter to you to be the son of God ? Oh great love ! But this great grace and favour is onely by Jesus Christ : in *Gal. 4.* it is plainly Christ that brings this grace of adoption to make us Sons, about the 4. and 5. verses : *In the fullnesse of time, God sent his Sonne made of a Woman* &c.

made under the Law, to redeeme them that are under the Law, that they may receive the Adoption of sons: Here you see, all this Christ doth, is to this end, that at length, through that he hath done, we might receive the adoption of Sons. As Christ is a way unto the pure grace and meere favour and loving kindnesse of God; so also unto all the fruits of grace, all the manifestations of it in the expression of Gods loving kindnesse in the fruits of the spirit. To give you some instances.

The first of all these kinds of the grace of God that hee doth ever bestow upon a person, is, the opening his eyes to see himselfe filthy, and to see what he is: Here begins a closing with Christ, to see a need of him, and to see the usefulness of him being received. Now marke this great busines of the opening of the eyes of a person, and you shall see he is a way unto it, 1/a. 4. 2. 6. there the Father doth captivate and treat with Christ, and in his treaty he speaks thus to him: *I will give thee for a Covenant to open the people to open the blind eyes.* You see this, it is he Christ that must open the blind eyes of men. Be-
Grieved, Men are mistaken that thinke that the Law makes men to see their own vilenesse, for a gracious sight of our vilenesse is the only work of Christ: the Law is a Looking-glasse able to represent the filthinesse of a person: but the Law gives not eyes to see that filthinesse: bring a Looking-glasse and set it before a blind man, hee seeth no more spots on his face, then if he had none at all: though the Looking-glasse be a good glasse, yet the glasse cannot give light; yet if he had eyes, the glasse might represent the filthinesse. The Apostle S. James compares the

law to a looking-glasse, and that is all the law can do, to have a faculty to represent: but it doth not give a faculty to see what it doth represent: It is Christ alone that doth open the eyes of men, to behold their own vilnesse and filthinesse; and when Christ will open the eyes, then a man shall see himself, what he is.

Secondly, Repentance is a great grace; yet you shall find, beloved, in *Acts 11*, that it is meerly the work of Christ to give repentance unto men; *God hath set him up to be a Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance unto life*: It is Christ that grants repentance unto life; and if ever you will repent with a kind repentance, either you must fetch it from Christ, he must be the way, or you must goe without it.

Faith is a great grace of graces, the root of all graces to beleevers; and this is properly Christ, none but Christ that works Faith in a Beleever; the Apostle speaks this expressly, *Heb. 12. 2. looking to Jesus*, saith he there, *the Author and finisher of your faith*. He is the Author; it is he that begets it.

Thirdly, consider the whole life of spiritualnesse; Christ is the only way to all spirituall whatsoever: *I doe now live*, saith Paul, *yet not I, Christ lives in me; and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Sonne of God*. There is no life, but Christ lives in men. Whence is the naturall life of a man? It is from the soul: the soul once separated from the body, it is dead; so long as the soul is united to the body, the man is alive: Christ is the life of every beleeving soul: Christ is he that frames and gives life to men. In *Ephes. 2. 1*. *T*he *were dead in trespasses and sins, hath he quickned*; He

is that quickens men when they are dead in trespasses and sins : and in *John 3.* you have this admirable expressions, That, *the time is coming, and now is, that the dead shall heare the voyce of the Son of God,* and they that heare his voyce shall live: There is no life but by Christ alone, he is the way to all spirituall life whatsoever. So in brieft, beloved. There is not a scrap, as you may say, pertaining to a Christian, but it comes from Christ alone.

Fourthly, God hath therefore filled Christ full of all things, that we might fetch all from him. The Apostle tells us expressly, *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulnesse dwell.* *S. Iohn in chap. 1.* tells us to what purpose he was full of grace and truth, saying. *And of his fulnesse we all receive grace for grace.* The Psalmist, *Psal 68. 18.* hath this expression, *Thou hast received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell among them.* The Apostle quoting that Text, turns the words thus : *Thou hast given gifts to men :* It is as much as to say, That God bequeathed as much to Christ, as shall serve for his body; and this he distributes to the body, according to the proportionable need of it. The head is first the fountain, and hath all animall spirits planted in it : then doth it from it selfe derive all those animall spirits to every part ; from whence all have their severall motions : So that, I say ; The supply of all the believers wants concerning grace ; be it in matters of mortification of sinne, be it in the performance of duties of piety, mercy, and justice, or any other whatsoever; the supply of all must come from Christ alone, as he speaks himselfe, *Rev 1. I am Alpha and Omega, the*

beginning and the end of all things. My springs (saith the Psalmist, Psal. 87. 7.) all my springs are in thee : He speakes of Christ in the name of God, as if God spake to Christ his Sonne, all my springs are in thee : Therefore you shall finde God alwayes dealing with men, as Pharaoh dealt in Egypt with his own people ; They came complaining of their wants to Pharaoh : Go to Joseph (saith Pharaoh) heare what he saith ; he turnes all over to Joseph. Thus doth God deal, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear yee him, saith God the Father : therefore Christ saith, The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son : So that Christ rules the roaste, as Christ will dispose of things, so his Father sets to his seale, and underwrites his hand ; God never examines what Christ doth ; but every deed that is signed by Christ, the Father without any more adoe seals it, and manages all things by the hand of his Christ : Therefore Christ saith in the last of Matth. All power is given to mee, both in Heaven and Earth. The Father made all over to him, every thing. The truth is, beloved, the Godhead is absolutely a being of it selfe, but this Godhead was pleased to unite it selfe to the humanity : and this Godhead united to the humanity is one person. Thus it pleased Christ to manage all things in the world not in the Godhead alone ; but as the Godhead is united unto the manhood. You must not conceive when God makes over the managing of things to Christ, that he sits still. But the Godhead is now united to the manhood ; so it is, Christ God and Man, that works together. And by this kind of way there is a neerer and better access

for us unto God, because here is a humanity that is of some relation unto us, and so of neerer acquaintance with us : The Godhead in its simple nature is of too remote a distance for us to come near.

Fifthly, Moreover, he is not onely a way to grace, but the encreasings in grace : The Apostle, Col. 2. 10. tells us, that *we are compleat in him who is the head of the body, the head of all principalities*, not only that we have substance and being, but that we are compleat in him ; and in the latter end of the same Chapter, Christ followes the allusion of the head and body, and saith, that the *parts having nourishment, ministred by joynts encrease with the encreasings of God*. When the parts are united to the head, & the head through the veins and nervs conveyes nourishment to those parts, then the parts not onely live, but encrease with the encreasings of God. The Apostle, 1 Pet. 2. 4. saith, *to whom comming as to a living stone, speaking to Believers, you as lively stones are built up a spirituall house* : he doth not say, stones that have life, but *lively stones*, they have more then bare life : Nay further, *as lively stones are built up together*. There is a growing up by the power of Christ, in comming to the *living stone*, as the Apostle doth there call him.

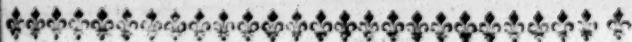
And that is not all neither ; We have not onely growth by Christ his grace, but restauration and recovery upon case of relapse. Suppose a believer fall, the same Christ that gave him life, and set him upon his legs, must raise him up again when he is downe ; *Though I fall, yet shall not I be cast downe* saith hee, that is, I shall not be left, but shall be

raised againe : *The ransomed of the Lord (Isai h 35 ult.) shall returne unto Sion, they shall rejoyce with everlasting joy upon their head, they shall obtaine joy and gladnesse, and sorrow and sighing shall flye away. They shall returne to Sion, they were of Sion before. A man is not said to returne, except he were in the place before, and so is comming againe; so the ransomed of the Lord shall returne to Sion. How? They are the ransomed of the Lord; it is the ransom of Christ that brings them back from boudage to their Sion againe: And when he brings them back he brings them back with everlasting joy upon their heads, they obtaine joy and gladnesse, and sorrow and sighing doth flye away.*

Thus I have endeavoured to declare the maine body in what kind *it is a way* from a state of sin and wrath, to a state of grace.

I should have further considered what kind of way Christ is, and upon what grounds Christ is become such a way as he is: but I consider the season; I shall not therefore trespass upon your patience, though my fingers itch to bee dealing in that which remaines. There is abundance of excellency behind, Christ hee is a free way, Christ a neere way, Christ is a way of quick riddance of all businesse you have to do in the way; Christ is a firm way, there is no fear of sinking: Christ is a satisfying and pleasant way, *all thy wayes are pleasant*; Christ he is a safe way, there is a continuall guard and conduct in that way; Christ is an easie way to *hit* *waysaring men*, though *fools* (saith *Isaiah*) shall not erre therein. Christ is a spacious way, Thou hast set my feet in a large room

saith David. Now all this is founded upon the good pleasure of God : He will have Christ to be the way : it is founded upon the interest that Christ hath in God ; it is founded upon the purchase of Christ, that hath bought this for man ; it is likewise founded upon the conquest of Christ, as he makes his own way, and beats all off that keeps thee from finding this way : it's founded lastly, upon his bowels to the sonnes of men, that can never passe over the gulf, till he hath made himselfe a bridge for them. These things I should have shewed you by setting forth the excellency of this way. But of these hereafter.



SERMON III.

John 14. 6.

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life &c.

Have a word or two to speake more fully, if possibly it may be, to satisfie such as are not fully resolved in the things I formerly delivered. Christ I said, is the way from wrath, from the wrath of the Father, from wrath in its affection, (as I may so speak) from wrath in the fruits of this affection of wrath. I delivered this Position indeed : *The punishment, or the rod of God, or rather chastisement, is not for sinne, but from sinne.* Some stumble and stick at the expression, peradventure through mistake ; In brieft therefore, beloved, to cleare both my selfe and your judgements, if it be possible ; when I say that believers are not

not afflicted for sin ; i mean thus , God when he doth afflict a believer , he hath not an eye to the desert of his sin, and thereupon doth lay part of this desert upon his back ; For Christ hath borne the whole desert of sin, upon his own back : Whatsoever desert of sin the believer doth beare , Christ did not bear it, or else God takes satisfaction twice for one thing: Mark it well, I pray, beloved, if the Lord will scourge a believer, as now pouring out upon him what his transgression hath deserved; wherefore did Christ die ? Christ did die to satisfy for the fault of sin ; and in his death God was actually satisfied , as you shall finde it in Esay 53. *He beheld the travell of his soule , and hee was satisfied with it.* With what was hee satisfied ? He was satisfied with the travell of his Soule, with the burthen his Soule bare, with the punishment of sin, that was upon him ; with this God was satisfied ; if God was satisfied with the travell of his Soule , how can God come to exact a new satisfaction by pouring out his wrath for sin upon believers ? To be satisfied and to aske more, is a contradiction ; either he was not satisfied , or being satisfied, he could aske no more. In brief therefore, beloved, consider thus much, There is not the least action, or rather intention of any revenge, for a sin committed ; when the Lord doth in any kinde afflict his people , all the revenge that sin doth deserve, Christ hath taken away. and hath born it upon his own back : And therefore he is said to *save to the uttermost* [Heb. 7. Chr. 25.) *them that come to God by him, he saves to the uttermost*, saith the Apostle : He ~~did~~ not left a dram nor a jot behind , not so much as the least scatter

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rings of wrath to light upon the head of a believer for whose sake hee bare the indignation of the Lord : whereupon the very nature of affliction in generall is altered and changed , as *death* in particular. It was the wages of sin at first , it is become the bed of rest now, *They shall rest in their beds. each in his uprightness* , saith the Prophet. Afflictions they were the rod of Gods anger ; they are now the gentle purges of a tender father. God heretofore afflicted for sinne , now God doth afflict men from sinne ; *This is all the fruit* , saith the Prophet , *to take away their sins* : not to take away the present sin , as if affliction did make an end, and so blot out transgression ; this doth directly strike at the heart of Christ himselfe : But *this is all the fruit, to take away sin*, that is , to break off sin, to prevent sin. *Before I was afflicted* , saith David, *I went astray*, but now have I learned to keepe thy Law : therefore, saith he, *it is good for me that I have been afflicted* : in this regard, because of prevention. But I cannot dwell upon these particulars,

If you will but casy it clearly without carping, or a spirit that seeks contention and quarrelling : you shall never need to stumble at such a position as this ; for afflictions are the smiles of God, as gracious, as the choycest embraces. God doth never manifest a loving stroaking of a soule, more then he doth when he afflicts it, to make his love appeare in these afflictions. And the truth is , as Christ hath purchased rest and peace for believers, so he hath likewise purchased afflictions for them too , the wisdom of God seeing affliction as usefull as dandlings themselves : But still I say, this

this remaines firme , That Christ is a way from all wrath whatsoever , as it is the manifestation of Gods displeasure unto the creatures sinning, and thereby pouring out the desert of this sinfulness, or the fruit of the desert of this sinfulness upon them. Christ is a way to the state of grace ; grace in respect of favour; grace in respect of the fruits thereof, and this we have dispatched.

The next thing considerable is, *What kind of way Christ is to those that come to the Father by him* : I shall speak in brieft, or as briefly as possibly I may: Take notice in generall, that the Lord hath laid out Christ as a way, with all the possible conveniences that may either win a people to this way, or satisfie and refresh a people that are in this way; he hath so furnished Christ the way with all possible accommodations, as there cannot be devised what the heart of man himselfe can desire, but he shall finde it in this way (*Christ*) : So that all I shall speake of this subject is, that as it may give abundance of light, so you may apply it all along by way of motive, to stir you up, to quicken you to set footing in to this way, in respect of those severall conveniences that do accompany it.

In the first place there is this great and ineffable excellency and accommodation in Christ the way that he is a free way for all commers to enter into, without any cause of fear, that they shall trespasse by entring. He is a ~~free~~ way, I say, a way that costs nothing, a way barr'd up to no person whatsoever, a way whose gates are cast off from the hinges; nay rather, a way that hath no gates at all unto it, a cheap way to us, a costly way indeed un-

to the Father, and to *Christ* too. O beloved ! a man might study a while to find out, whether there be more pretiousnesse in *Christ* himself, as hee is our way, or in the fitting of *Christ* to be our way. The Person of *Christ* is invaluable, ther's nothing to be compared with him : But considering him as our way to salvation, whether there be more pretiousnesse in that, or in the fitting of him for it ? *Yee are bought with a price* (saith the Apostle Saint *Peter*) *not of corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.* Observe it, I pray, that *Christ* might be a fit way for us to the Father, it cost the Father, and *Christ* himself that, in comparison of which, Silver and Gold, and the most precious things in the world, are called but corruptible things ; which makes the Apostle breake out into a way of expostulation in admiration, rather then into a way of affirmation : *Oh ! What manner of love is this that the Father hath shewed unto us, that we should be called the sonnes of God ? Greater love then this can no man shew, then to lay downe his life for his enemies.* What did it cost the Father ? it cost him that, that was most precious to him of all things in the world, it cost him his own Sonne, not a cessation of the being of his Sonne, but the bitterness of his Sonne : though a man doth not lose his childe, yet it goes to the heart of him to see his childe tormented ; much more when he himself must be forced to be the tormentor. *Abraham* thought God put him hard to it, when he must be the Butcher, to slay his owne onely, his deare *Isaac*. God the Father was put to it as much, nay, much more :

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In *Abraham* the thing was but offered, *GOD* would not have him doe it actually, yet it went to his heart that he should be appointed to doe it; but it would have cut his heart if he had done it; if he had cut the throat of *Isaac*. If nothing could content him before he had a child: *What wilt thou give me, seeing I goe childlesse?* What would *Abraham* have said, if receiving a child, he should have been made a butcher to his own child? yet the Father was put to this, to make *Christ* a way to believers: he was his onely beloved Sonne, in whom he was pleased, *Pro. 8. 30. I was daily his delight* (speaking of the Father and *Christ* under the notion of *Wife* and *home*) *I was his delight, rejoycing alwayes before him in the habitable parts of his Earth.* Must it not come neerer unto him to part with such a Son? Nay, must it not go neerer to him that he himselfe must be not onely a spectator of all that cruelty, but he must be the principall actor himselfe in all the tragedy? He doth not only leave *Christ* to men, but when men could not fetch blood enough he takes the rod into his owne hand, and will fetch blood himselfe from his beloved Son: it pleased the Lord to bruise him (saith the Prophet, *Isaia. 53*) It did not only please the Lord that men should bruise him; but it pleased the Lord himselfe to bruise him: It was a strange apprehension that *GOD* should look upon the anguish of the soule of *Christ*, and instead of breaking out into furiousnesse against the instruments of cruelty, he himselfe should be satisfied with beholding it; as much as to say, it did his heart good to see it: hee shall see of the travell of his soule, and bee satisfied: Not onely satisfied towards

towards men ; but satisfied in himselfe : It gave him content to see the travell of his Son : certainly, beloved, the bowells of God must infinitely be beyond the reach of the creature, towards a poore sinner ; that he could go so farre in a contrary way to his owne Sonne ; that there might be the fruit of these bowells to his enemies. One would think, God should rejoyce to see the confusion of his enemies ; and not rejoyce to see the bitterneffe of the travell of the soule of his Sonne, that his enemies might escape scot-free : but this it cost the Father ; he must not only behold, or allow the suffering of his Son, but he must be an actor of it himselfe : nay, he must be pleased in it.

Certainly, the Father was exceedingly pleased with it, because it doth commend the great end of the Father : the main end he drove at, was the salvation of sinners : and this in his wisdom, he saw the fittest way, that it could not be done but by this way ; therefore it pleased him, in that his purpose should not be frustrate of his end. You know when a man hath a great mind to a thing, if the way he goes in prospers not, he is displeased ; if it prosper, he is contented in it, he delights to see his businesse succeed : So was it with the Father.

You may see what it cost Christ too, as well as the Father ; the Father must resigne his part in his Son ; a great matter, not only to part with him in respect of death ; but in a manner to part with him in life too ; *My God, My God,* (saith Christ) *why hast thou forsaken me ?* Here you see, God parts with him in life ; and Christ must part with his life, as well as the Father must part with his Sonne ; nay, in some manner,

manner, Christ must part with that which is better then his life, with the glory and majesty of his divinity. He did not part with the essence of his divinity, but with the glory of it, hee parted : as *Phil. 2. 6.* though hee thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he took upon him the forme of a servant, and made himself of no reputation; hee did empty himself as the meaning of the word is, he did put off, or lay aside the Majestie and glory he had, that hee might seem to be a meer carpenters sonne. For a King all his life time to undergoe the notion of a begger, and not to recover out of this estate all his whole life, but even to lie downe in this low condition in the grave, it would seem a great losse unto him: man would reckon this a great matter for a King to debase himself so low. It cost Christ more then this; look upon all the sufferings of Christ; look upon death it self, together with the reproach and shame of it; the death he died was called a *curst death of the crosse*: although he was not ashamed, that is, he *despised the shame*, yet shame and reproach he must beare. So, if we look upon God and Christ, as making a way for men, it is not a free way, it is not a cheap way: but looking upon our selves, that have received the benefit of this way, and this Christ; it is a free way indeed free for man without any cost or charge; free, as he is a way to all sorts of men, none excepted, none prohibited; who ever will, may set footing in Christ. There is nothing can barre one person more then another, from entring into Christ as a way. I know beloved, this seems harsh to the ears of some people, that there is no difference to be made among

men, not onely poor as well as rich ; but that the wicked as well as the godly are admitted; that is strange. But let me tell you, beloved, Christ is a free way for a drunkard, for a whoremaster, for a harlot, an enemy to Christ; I say, Christ is as free a way for such a person to enter into him, as for the most godly person in the world. But doe not mistake me, I doe not say, Christ is a free way to walk in him, and yet to continue in such a condition; for Christ will never leave a Person in such filthinesse, to whom he hath given to enter into himself; mark well what I say; but for entrance into him, Christ is as free a way for the vilest sort of sinners, as for any person under heaven : If Christ hath given a heart to a sinner to set footing into himselfe, that is, to receive, to take him for his Christ; if Christ hath given him a heart to take him for his Christ in reality; to take him truly, and unfainedly: Christ is a way for such a person to the Father, though hee be the vilest person under heaven: and he is to him a way unto the Father, even while hee is ungodly, before he is amended; and he may take take his part in this Christ, as an ungodly person, as well as when he is righteous. In this regard, I say, Christ is a free way, God looks nothing in the world from the sonnes of men, they what kinde of men soever, he doth look nothing from them, to have a right to Christ; he did freely give Christ unto them without considering of any thing, that they might bring with them.

Nay more, God doth not only not look for any thing; but hee will not take notice, nor regard

any discouragements in men, to keep them from the inheritance, to keep him off from giving unto them a right unto Christ.

I would fain have this point cleared, and fully and exactly proved, because I doubt, many persons will not receive it: But I tell you, wee must not be afraid to set forth the praise of the glory of Gods grace, as fearing the squeamishnes of the stomachs of some men: First therefore, consider that Christ is delivered over unto men, to be their way unto the Father, of meer gift, of free gift: what is free then gift? That Christ is delivered over to be a way to the Father, by a meer and absolute gift, is more plainly expressed in *Isa. 42. I will give thee* (saith the text) *to be a covenant to the people*: In matter of gift, what is there in the richest man in the world more then in the veriest begger to partake of it, supposing the thing that comes to him is a gift? A begger can take a gift as well as the richest man. Nay, a thief that is condemned to the Gallows may receive a gift of the King, as well as the greatest favourite in Court: and if any thing be tendred a meer gift unto a thief; his very being a thief, and his being ready to be executed, is no prejudice to the world to bar him from participating of the gift which shall be bestowed upon him, as a gift: If Christ be a free gift unto men, then it must follow to whom the Father will reach out Christ, there is nothing in that person to hinder the participation of him.

Objeſt. But some will say, though Christ be a gift, yet he is a gift upon condition.

Ans. For that I cannot see, but there is a

contradiction, to say he is a gift, and yet conditions required; What are the conditions in a covenant, but a meer bargain and sale? I will doe this, and thou shalt do that; do this, and thou shalt have that: What difference is there between this, and a bargain and sale? That God should require conditions of men, is but to receive Christ as upon bargain and sale: but Christ must be really, and actually a gift. When the King gives a pardon to a thief, what are the conditions? Peradventure the thief can doe his King service, if his life be spared: But if his life be spared upon service doing, it is not a gift, but a bargain, as much as to make a contract, thus, Doe such a piece of service, then life is thine: I say, it derogates from the nature of a gift, that there should be a condition required; and in the Gospel, that is Christ given over to men, cannot be said to be freely given over to them, if man must buy him: mistake me not, I speak not all this while against Holinesse and Righteousnesse, but that becomes a people to whom Christ is a way; for holy and righteous they shall be; Christ will make them holy, and put his Spirit into them, to change their hearts, and to work upon their spirits: but this is not the condition required to partake of Christ; Christ himself gives himself, and then he bestowes these things when he is given. A man is not said to have a thing upon condition, when he hath it before any condition be performed: I say, Christ is given to men first, before they doe any thing in the world, and all they doe, they doe by Christ present in them; *I live, yet not I, but Christ* *lives in me; and the life that I now live, I live by the faith*

of the Sonne of God : We doe not so much as live, but by the life of Christ, which is life in us. All the actions of life proceed from the soule, now present : How then comes the actions of the soule to be a condition to partake of the soule, that gives life, and by its presence works such actions ? *Christ* is the soul of every beleever, that animates, and acts the beleever in all things whatsoever : Must not this life *Christ* be put into a beleever before he can actuate life, which as a stream springs from that life ? How then can this be a condition, to receive, to have *Christ* ; when *Christ* is first come by whom these things that are called conditions are afterwards wrought, he himselfe being present to worke them ? So say I, God bestowes *Christ* upon men to be a way to bring them to the Father, he is an absolute and free gift : There is no other motive that *Christ* should be the Son of a Person ; then meerly the good pleasure of the Father, the bowels of God himselfe ; Nor for thy sake, but for my owne sake, nor for thy sake, thou a rebellious and stubborne people, but for my owne sake. Here is the freeness of *Christ*, to a persons coming to him ; when he comes meerly for Gods sake, and God meerly upon his good pleasure doe it, because he will : *I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth : neither is it in him that willeth (saith Paul, Rom. 9.) nor is it in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy : Some that Christ becomes a way unto them, not out of their will, not out of their dispositions, not out of their holy walkings, but out of that mercy that proceeds out of the meer will of God, his owne*

good pleasure is the only fountaine and spring of it. Beloved, I beseech you seriously ponder and consider, that the Gospell is therefore called the Gospell, because it is glad tidings unto men, and so the Angel interpreted it, *Behold I bring glad tidings*: Why glad tidings? In this regard glad, the poore sinner hee is a broken creature; nay more, hee is a dead creature; yee, *who were dead in trespasses and finnes*. That life now is reached out unto such a person that is a dead person; herein it is plaine, that there comes forth that grace from the Lord; that a creature being dead, who can act nothing towards life, yet hee shall receive life: *The time is coming that the dead shall heare the voyce of the Sonne of God, and they that heare it shall live, Iohn 5. 25.* How come they by life? Is there any action of theirs towards life? They are dead; it is the voyce of the Sonne of God, puts life into their dead souls: And it is glad tidings, that though the creature can doe nothing, yet Christ brings enough with him from the fountaine of the Father, to bestow upon them, to bring them to him. To shew you a com- plaine Scripture, that Christ doth become a way God to the Father, meerly as a free gift without any thing in man required, looke into the 55 of Ieremy, 1 verse, *Every one that thirsteth, that is, every one that hath a minde, come to the waters, and he that hath no money: Come yee, buy and eat yee, without price, (saith the Prophet) and then hee calls upon an objurgation in the next Verse, therefore spend yee money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which satisfies not?* Eat

Eat that which is good, and let your soule delight in selfe in farnesse : incline your eares, hearken, and your soule shall live ; I will make an everlasting covenant with you even the sure mercies of David. Here is the closure of all ; Dost thou thirst, that is, hast thou a mind really to Christ, that Christ should say really to thy soule, I am thy salvation ? It may bee thou dost suspect, saying within thy selfe, Christ is not my portion, I am not fit for Christ, I am a great sinner. This is bringing a price to Christ ; but you must come without money, and without price. And what is this to come without money, and without price ? It is nothing but to take the offer of Christ, these waters of life, to take them meere and simply as a gift brought, and this is a sure mercy indeed : These are the sure mercies of David, when a man receives the things of Christ only because Christ doth give them ; not in regard to any action of ours, as the ground of taking them. I meane in regard of any action of ours that we must bring along with us, that must concur that we may partake of this gift. In *Hosea 14. 4*. Christ speaks there thus to his people, ' I will heale their backslidings, I will love them freely, that is, I will love them for mine own sake. In *Rom. 2. 23, 24*. the apostle speakes excellently concerning this free grace of God bestowed in Christ upon them, *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, but are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Iesus Christ*. Marke brethren, first he takes off creatures, and all that a creature can doe, *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God* : Then shewes how we should partake of justification

namely, *freely*, through Christ. So Rom. 5. The Apostle speaks at large concerning the participation of Christ, to be our Christ of meer free gift; where he makes a large comparison of our participating of sinne from Adam, and of our participating of life from Christ, and still in every passage speaking of participating of life from and by Christ, he comes in with these expressions of gift, and that it comes freely. In Rom. 5. 15. *But not as by the transgression of one, so is the free gift: for if through the transgression of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many: There is grace, and the gift by grace; so running on in this expression, in the 17. verse hee saith, For if by the offence of one, death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reigne in life by one Jesus Christ.* Still, I say, observe it, that we partake of life in Christ, and by Christ; and it runnes altogether upon this strain, that it comes by meer gift.

Doe but look in Ephes. 2. 4. and there you shall perceive how clear and full the Apostle is in this businessse, that Christ is made a way to life absolutely and meerly of free gift. But God (saith hee) *who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith hee loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickned us together with Christ; (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come hee might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.* Marke how hee goes on, for by grace are yee saved through faith, and

that not of your selves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, for wee are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Still he runnes upon mercy and grace, and works he excludes, that no creature might boast.

— If any thing were done on our part, to partake of Christ, wee might have wherein to boast. So likewise speaking of Abraham, Rom. 4. 2. For if Abraham were justified by works, hee had whercof to glory. We should have to glory, if wee should have the least hand in the participating of Christ; therefore God would give Christ freely unto his creature, because man should have no stroke in participating of him, that so it might be to the praise of the glory of his grace, that we should not glory; yea, that no flesh should glory in his presence: And therefore the same Apostle, Ephes. 3. 12 tells us, that from this grace, wee have boldnesse, and accesse with confidence through the faith of him: in regard that Christ is given unto men to bee a way unto the Father, and meerly of free gift; hence it is that we have boldnesse and accesse with confidence by the faith of him. Should we regard our owne works or qualifications, there would be some mixture of distrust; wee should have some feare that God would find out such and such a thought; therefore wee could never come with boldnesse and confidence, if wee did not come in Christ as a free gift bestowed upon us: for if there were one condition, and the least failing in that condition, God might take advantage upon that default, and so possibly wee might miscarry; and we being jealous and private to it, that there are faults in all we doe, wee should

be subject all our lives long to bondage (saith the Apostle) and should fear that God will take advantage of all that which is undone on our part, and so not fulfill what he hath promised on his part. But seeing we have Christ bestowed as a free gift of the Father, we come with boldnesse and accessse to the throne of grace. To establish or a little more to clear this, look Heb. 10. 18, 19, 20. Now where remission of sin is, there is no more offering for sinne, having therefore boldnesse to enter into the holy of holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way that he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. How come wee to have boldnesse? Through the new and living way made by the blood of Christ, not a new and living way by his blood, and our actions; but by his blood, that is, onely by his blood, meerly by his actions; and so passed over freely to us: this is that which makes us come with so much boldnesse.

Look into the closure of all the Scriptures, you shall find beloved, there can be nothing imagined more free; nay, so free, as the participating of Christ to be our way to the Father, nothing so free as this, Rev. 17. 22. Both the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, let him that heareth say, Come, and let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will (marke the expression) let him take of the water of life freely. Hast thou but a minde to Christ? come and take the water of life freely: it is thine, it is given to thee: there is nothing lookt for from thee to take thy portion in this Christ: thine hee is as well as any persons under heaven. Therefore beloved, you shall finde our Saviour exceedingly complaine, and that for this as a great fault, You will not come to

me that you might have life ; He that comes to me, I will in no wise cast him off ; upon no tearmes : Thou mayst object a thousand things , that if thou shouldst come and conclude Christ is thy Christ, he will reject thee, and that it will be but presumption : but in so doing thou rejectest thy selfe, and forsakest thy own mercy ; but Christ saith, whosoever he be what person soever ; I will in no wise cast him off, if he come unto me.

Secondly, as Christ is a free way, made over to men by free gift, without any thing in man to partake of this Christ : so he is a *safe way* to those that do take him ; I say, Christ is a safe way, a secure way, there is no danger of miscarriage in Christ. Let men take any other way in the world to heaven but Christ, and there are thousands of dangers, and thousands of wayes to miscarry ; but there is no way that a soule can possibly miscarry that takes Christ for his way : *Satan hath desired to winnow thee* (saith Christ, Luk. 22. 31. speaking to Peter) *but I have prayed for thee that thy faith faile not*. Nay he undertakes so, for them that come to him, that the gates of hell shall not prevaile against them. Believers that receive Christ, have not only the guard of Angels to secure them, but they have the guard of the Spirit of Christ, that shall lead them, not only lead them into truth, but lead them into *all truth*. The Spirit will not take a believer and lead him by the hand, and set him into the way (as a friend doth lead one a mile out of Towne, and then leave him alone to go the rest of the way :) No, but the Spirit leads him *into truth*, and into *all truth* ; he will be a companion of the soule to secure it, and conduct

conduct to the very harbour and haven it selfe. It is a priviledge of this Nation that Merchants may have a convoy, a navy royall, it may be, to goe out with them; but it will hardly come in with them: Therefore there is not absolute security in this convoy: But beloved, he that takes Christ, he hath the spirit to go in, and out before him, to goe forth, to come back, to be all the way with him; Nay, hee hath given himself to be his protector, *I will never faile thee, nor forsake thee, Heb. 13.4.* In all other wayes there may be danger, in respect of rubs, in respect of difficulties or troubles that may arise in them: but, do but looke in *Isa. 37.* you shall see what safety there is in this way Christ, unto those that make choice of him, in respect of any danger that may ly in the way. *Isa. 35. 8, 9.* the Prophet tells us that a high way there shall be, and that way shall bee called the way of holinesse, and the unclean shall not passe over: and in vers. 9. mark the security, *No Lyon shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall be found there: but the redeemed of the Lord shall walke there: No Lyon, no ravenous beast, nothing to make them miscarry.* If a man haply travell through a wilderness, there may be Beares and Lyons, as in new England, and in other forraine parts, they ly open to many dangers: So let a man choose righteousness, I mean his own righteousness, as his way to heaven: Oh what a world of danger lies here? Satan hath continuall advantage against him from that righteousness, his own corrupt heart is ready to swallow him up: but there is no Lyon in the way Christ.

Thirdly, as he is a safe way, so he is a lightsome way; Christ, I say, is a lightsome way to the Father. Solo-

Solomon tells us, it is a joyfull thing for a man to behold the light of the Sunne : it is a great heaviness and bitterness to the spirit of a traveller to be benighted, to be overtaken with darkness, it is very uncouth, and very uncomfortable ; therefore when we come to the Summer seasons, they are the best seasons for travellers, because it is lightsome, long. All wayes to the Father but Christ, are meer darkness, nothing but darkness : Christ is the light of the world : *I am come a light into the world: he is the light that enlightheth every one that cometh into the world.*

Fourthly, Christ (and this is an excellent consideration) is a *neere way* ; all that take him to come to the Father by him, have a short cut to the Father in comparison of any other way whatsoever. Christ is the string, other wayes are the bow ; all other wayes are compasses about ; nay, they are labyrinths, in which men lose themselves, after they are wearied with toil : Christ he is a *neere way* to the Father ; He is nigh that justifieth me, who shall condemne me ? *Isa. 50. 8.* But more especially beloved, observe, how neere a way Christ is to the Father, you have it excellently described in the tenth of the Romans, v. 6. *The righteousness which is of faith, that is, of Christ, speakes on this wise, Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into Heaven ? That is to bring Christ downe from above ; or who shall descend into the deep ? that is to bring up Christ againe from the dead: But what saith it ? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, this is the word of faith which we preach.* Marke, when a man chuseth Christ for his way to the Father, there needs no clambring up to Heaven to fetch downe Christ,

nor digging to the bottome of the deep to fetch him up; Christ is such a way to the Father, that instead of bringing the person to the Father, hee brings the Father down to the person: *The word is nigh unto thee, even in thy heart.* Therefore the Apostle tells us, you *who were sometimes as farre off*, are made nigh by the blood of Christ, *Ephes. 2. 13.* Just as if there were such a course taken, that the *Indies*, whence are all treasures, should be brought and set at the suburbs of *London*: just so doth Christ bring the Father unto men, and becomes such a way, as that there is but one step from the lowest condition of sinfulnessse, to the highest of being a sonne of God. There is but one step betweene the Father and them that chuse Christ to be the way. And therefore the first thing Christ preached was this, *Repent, for the Kingdome of heaven is at hand:* What is that? It is present. You have heard much, I suppose beloved, of your Northerne passage to the *Indies*; a great deal of time hath been spent to finde such a cut that the Voyage may be done in halfe the time. O beloved, look upon Christ, hee is such a way to the Father, that the Voyage is done in a step from a state of ungodlinesse, to the state of justification, to the state of *salvation* settled upon the soul. Christ is such a way, that there is but one step from one terme to the other. Look now but upon the old way of the law, there must be a continuance in all things written in the book of the law, to doe them: There must be a going on to perfection of righteousnessse, before men can come to justification unto life and salvation. This is a long way.

Now how neer hath Christ made the way un-

the Father? Thus neer, *hee that beleeveith shall be saved*. Let me be bold to tell you beloved, you are in a full an estate of justification before God, you are in as true a state of salvation, you that are beleevers as they that are now already in heaven; *Beleeve in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved*, such a neer way is Christ.

Yet still people will be cavilling, Where are good Workes all this while? What, justified by faith alone, saved by Christ alone? Let me tell you, if Christ be the way, works are not the way except they be Christ. But must not wee worke? Yea, but for other purposes: The Lord hath propounded other ends for which we are to worke. *Ye are bought with a price, that's done, therefore glorifie God in your bodies and spirits: being delivered (of safety it seems is past) being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, wee serve in holinesse and righteousness without feare before him, all the dayes of our life*. Doe wee serve towards deliverance? Then deliverance is not before serving; but saith Zacharie *being delivered, we serve*. Luke 1.74. First wee are delivered from wrath before we step a step into any duties whatsoever; we doe not the duty to bee delivered, but wee doe the duty becaule wee are delivered.

And seeing all things are settled by Christ for a free gift, all we doe is for Christ himself, I say that we doe, we doe for Christ, not for our selves; if we doe it for our selves, wee doe but labour in vain. Suppose we could compasse never so much good by doing, it is but labour in vain, it was compassed before hand for us: If a man will

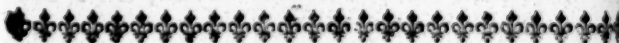
a hundred miles for money, if that money be proffered to him before he step out of his house, at his doore, his journey is in vaine, seeing he might have had it before he stepped out of his doore; and that which was the end of his journey might have been attained without troubling himself at all. Christ comes and brings justification, loving kindnesse and salvation, he layes them downe, presents them, delivers them to the heart: when wee are ungodly, hee enters into Covenant that wee should become his: What needs then all this travell for life and salvation, seeing it is here already?

Object. But seeing we get nothing by it, this is discouragement for men to work, may some say.

Ans. It is true, it is a discouragement to all selfeish-men to work, and whether a man worke or work not at all, it is all one, if hee be but for himself; if a man worke never so much, if he bee wholly selfeish for himselfe, God rejects it; but when a man will worke for Christ, for a man that hath a touch of the loving kindnesse of Christ, and therefore stands ready to speak for the praise of the glory of his grace that hath so freely saved him, for such a man to worke, is as welcome to him for Christs sake, as if he were to worke for his owne salvation. You have many ingenuous spirits in the world, will be more free to serve a friend that hath already raised them, then others will be to serve a master that they may bee raised: there is a service of thankfulnessse, which usually is more cordiall, more sedulous, then all mercenary services that are forced. This the true service

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of a beleever in serving Christ, his eye is to the glory of Christ, in regard of what Christ hath done already for him; and not in expectation of any thing Christ hath to doe, which he hath not yet done: He looks upon all as perfectly done for him in the hand of Christ, and ready to be delivered out into his hand as severall occasions require. And being thus *compleated by Christ*, not to be merited by the creature, having nothing now to doe for himself; all he doth, he doth for Christ. Thus you see Christ is a *near way* unto the Father, there cannot be possibly a nearer way: so that now there is a great deal of labour and bitterness saved: Thus you may be encouraged to receive Christ for your way. There are some remarkable considerations in Christ, wherein he is our way, wherein we may receive him, wherein is abundance of comfort; but the time hath outstripped me.



SERMON IV.

JOHN 14. 6.

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, &c.

He next thing considerable we entered upon, is, *what kinde of way Christ is to the Father*: First, as you heard to day, he is a free way for all commers. There is not a barre set up against any person in the world, the way is open: It is a foule delusion of Satan in the heart of any person who

whatsoever, to say, Christ doth not belong to me, I would faine have Christ, but I may not close with him; let this consideration be never so plausible in the heart of a person, it is a false consideration; for for there is no bar in the world, if there be but a heart to step into him. If a man have a minde to step into the Kings high-way out of his house, which is the subjects priviledge; no man can say to him, you trespasse in so doing, it is made to be common for all: so is Christ a common way to all sorts of persons whatsoever, to whom there is a heart given to step into him.

Some are offended that I should say, Christ is a way, even to the drunkard and to the whoremonger, and the vilest sort of persons have as good a right to Christ for their way to the Father, and to apply Christ to themselves, as any. But beloved, be not injurious to the grace of God, be not injurious to your selves and others, what saith Christ himselfe, speaking to those justiciaries, the Pharisees, both devout and blamelesse men in their lives, *even that Publicans and harlots enter into the Kingdome of heaven while they are shut out.* If we the Ministers of Jesus Christ should preach that a whore hath right to lay hold upon the Kingdome of God in Christ, to lay hold upon Christ for salvation; this should bee counted a licentious doctrine. Take heed you cast not dirt into the face of Christ, *Publicans (saith he) and harlots enter into the Kingdome of heaven;* I say it, therefore, and say it boldly, the wickedest wretch that stands here at this present in the presence of God, if the Lord hath but given heart to that wicked wretch, now at this instant

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willing;

willingly to close with the Lord Jesus Christ; to take the Lord Jesus Christ for his Christ, though he be now in the vilest condition that ever he was in his life, I say, if hee have a reall willingnesse at this instant, to close with the Lord Jesus Christ, it gives him an absolute, compleat, and perfect interest in Christ, hee is as much his Christ, as the Christ of a Saint saved in glory. Beloved, we are ready to runne another strange way: If a man have a little holinesse and righteousnesse, he thinks now that in regard of that holinesse and righteousnesse, he may without presumption close with Christ; hee doth in this over-throw the way of the Gospel; *hee came to save that which was lost*, saith the Text; but a person it seems must be found before he be saved. *He came not to call the righteous, but sinners*; but a man must be righteous before hee have to doe with the calling of Christ: see now, whether this be with, or against the Gospel; Free grace therefore, even to sinners, is no licentious doctrine, nor doth it a jot maintain the continuance in sin; I say therefore, Christ doth belong to every person that closeth with him, though hee bee in his sinfulness. Christ indeed doth wash, cleanse, and adorn a person, when he is closed withall; but there is none clean, till Christ himselfe doth enter, who makes clean where he doth enter.

I thought good to speak briefly thus much by way of addition to what I delivered before: did you know the objections of persons against this delivered; I should gladly indeavour to give satisfaction to them: but observe, you shall find the whole strain of the Gospel runs continually thus; *Christ*

came to save the lost, he died for the ungodly : while wee were sinners, Christ died for us : hee received gifts for the rebellious, that the Lord might dwell among them ; And such like are the terms of the Gospell, upon which Christ is tendred to our souls Now then, I say to every afflicted soule, Art thou rebellious, an enemy, ungodly, a harlot, lost ? nay, what art thou worse then enmity it selfe ? If thou art not worse, Christ came for thee while thus, though no better then thus : he comes to tender himselfe unto thee to take him, whilst thou art thus, before thou art any better. Now if this be true, when Christ is reached out unto thy spirit, why art thou so doubtfull ? Why wilt thou answer, No, I dare not close with him, he belongs not to me ? But suppose Christ should speak from heaven as audibly to thy spirit, as I do to thy ear, and say, Be of good cheere as vile a sinner as thou art, I am thy Christ. wouldst thou close with him then ? Should that be Gospell indeed ? Behold, I tell you, Christ cannot, Christ will not speake more from heaven then he doth in his Gospell : If you find hee speakes in his Gospel, it is as much as if hee spake to your spirits from heaven. It was a delusion of Dives in Luke in the parable, he would have Abraham go and tell his brethren from him, in what torments he was : what saith Abraham ? If they will not heare Moses and the Prophets, neither will they heare one arise from the dead, Luke 16.31. I say, beloved, unto you, if you will not heare the voyce of the Gospell, neither would you heare the voyce of Christ speaking to you : for you would suspect whether it were Christ or no.

Obj^t Well, but you will say, this is a way to lead men to a licentious course of life.

Ans^r. I say the contrary : it is the only way to lead men into a more enlarged way of holiness, then any way in the world, and this I will declare by and by unto you.

We have further considered that Christ is a *lightsome* way, that Christ is a *neere* way: we cannot dwell upon these, we will go on to make good what I promised to you : The consideration of Christ, as a *freeway* to all commers, is the only way to build men up in a more enlarged course of holiness and righteousness, then all the devices in the world can raise them to. Beloved, let me tell you, the rarest self-deniall, the frequentest prayer in the world, the greatest study, the most beating down of the body by exactest fastings, reckon what other graces you can, they come all short to build up man in obedience to the will of Christ, they come short of this one thing to lay hold upon him as a man is a sinner, and to receive it as an undoubted truth, that Christ is as much Christ now, as he is the Christ of a Saint in heaven. And this will further appeare, if we enquire how Christ is such a way, as there is no way where there is a quicker and better riddance of the sinnes and imployments believers shall have in the world, then in Christ. I will note one thing of the way, before I goe on, to make clear this thing, and that is this ; It is a received conceit among many persons, that our obedience is a way to heaven; and though it be not say they, yet it is *via ad regnum*, though it be not the way.

of our reigne, yet it is the way to our Kingdome.

Pardon me, beloved, if I give you a hint or two of another thing before I goe on, let me deliver you this position: There is no believer under heaven doth come to heaven, before he hath served his generation: there is no person is a believer, and hath received Christ, but after he hath received Christ, he is created in this Christ unto good works, that he should walk in them. He that sprinkleth them with clean water, that they become clean from all their filthines, puts also a new Spirit into them, and doth cause them to walke in his statutes and testimonies, *he takes away their stony hearts, and gives them hearts of flesh, he writes his Law in their inward parts, and puts his feare into their hearts, that they doe not depart from him.* So that I say in conclusion, Sanctification of life is an inseparable companion with the justification of a person by the free grace of Christ. But withall I must tell you, that all this sanctification of life is not a jot the way of that justified person unto heaven; it is the busines of a person that he hath to doe in his way Christ, but it is not the way it selfe to heaven: if there be no more to clear it but the very Text, it is enough, Christ here saith, *i am the way, no man cometh to the Father but by me* Now I aske this question, are our workes of sanctification Christ himselte, are they not? If they be Christ himselte, then there are thousands of Christs in the world: if they be not Christ, then there is no comming to the Father by them, because the comming to the Father is by him alone, and by him as he is the sole way.

Now what derogation is there in this unto workes, to say, they are not the way to heaven, they are concomitant unto heaven, unto persons that shall come thither : the truth is, since redemption is managed by Christ, the Lord hath pointed out other ends and purposes for our obedience then salvation : salvation is not the end of any good work we doe; the ends of our good workes are, the manifestation of our obedience and subjection, the setting forth of the praise of the glory of the grace of God : and as it is the setting forth the praise of Gods grace ; so actually glorifying him in the world, the doing good to others, to be profitable to men, the meeting of the Lord Jesus Christ in them, where he will be found according to the promise. These are the speciall ends that obedience is ordained for, salvation being settled firm before. All that I will endeavour to build up, is this, to keep the true prerogative of Christ to himselfe alone, and that no righteousness of man intrench upon those priviledges that are onely his. Take away any thing of Christ, and give it to any creature, and you deny Christ in part, you destroy the Gospel, the life of which stands in the solennesse and onlinessse of Christ, from the beginning to the end of our perfection.

Now, beloved, to come unto that which I promised, Christ, I say, is such a way unto men, that whosoever chooseth him for their way, by him they come to a quick riddance and dispatch of the businesse of holinessse and sanctification, while they are to doe while they are 'in Christ the way. As it is with Merchants that goe to Sea, it may

the end of their voyage is to the *Indies*; but they have businesse in *France*, *Holland*, *Spaine*, or *Turkie*, and they put in there, their businesse is not the way to the end, but it is something they have in the way to doe, before they come to their journeyes end. All our obedience and righteoulnesse are but so many severall businesses here, which we are to dispatch while wee are in our way Christ toward heaven; and while Christ is our way, he provides so for us, that our businesse goes an-end. Now this Christ that wee have chosen to bee our way, it is hee alone that oylesthe wheelles of our spirits, and puts them into a nimble frame. Therefore in 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. *to whom coming* (saith the Apostle) *as unto a living stone* (speaking of Christ) *ye as lively stones are built up*: Mark it I pray you, Christ being a *living stone*, makes every one that comes o him *living*: he doth not onely give life to a person to be active in doing, but he gives livenesse to a person to be nimble in activenesse; as we say, such a man is a lively man, when he is quick in his businesse. The Lord Christ is a strong arme, that drawes a bow; the greater the strength of the arm is, the swifter is the flight of the Arrow, and the further the Arrow reaches; a weake arme makes the Arrow flie slowly, and fall quickly; the Lord Christ being the strength of every soul, he drawes the Bow with a mighty arme. Beloved, doe but conceive the more qualmish or sick any man is in his stomack, the more unapt such a person is to labour, hee is soone tired and spent: Now from whence proceeds the qualmishnesse of the stomack? It proceeds from want of spirits, or from

weaknesse of spirits; weaknesse of life is the occasion of faintnesse in the stomach. But suppose there bee a strong life, strong spirits in men, they are mighty to labour: Such is Christ our way, saith the Apostle, *When Christ who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory, I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.* Beloved, Christ is life it self, *him was life, and that life was the light of the world.* There is no life like the life of Christ, it is a fountain of life, all life that is besides, is but the stream of that fountaine. If therefore Christ be our life within us, according to the strength of that life, such is the strength of the Spirit. A great rooted tree, you know, sends up abundance of sap into the branches; whereas a small rooted tree feeds the branches leanly; the larger the root is, the larger the sap and bigger the growth, and the fuller the fruitfulness of the tree. Now Christ is a large root of the soule where he is once received; and as he is such a root, so there are answerable spirits comming from him. Marke what the Apostle saith, though hee confesseth of himself, he could doe nothing as of himself: Yet saith hee, *I am able to doe all things by Christ that strengthens me.* Yea so able to doe all things, that he confesseth the praise of Christs power, *when I am weak, then I am strong*: as if hee had said, the stronger my strength is in my selfe, the weaker I am to another thing: but the lesse strength there is in me, the more strong am I in Christ: Therefore hee sends us to Christ for strength, *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*: Beloved, I beseech you consider, if you would bee active persons indeed

you must have it from him in whom all our power and activenesse consists. You that are poore maid-servants, or widowes, you doe but little in the world, your stock doth not reach farre: but if you were married to a rich Merchant or some such great man, you could doe much more, because by the marriage of such a man, you are interested into a large stock, and his stock is yours: So closing once with the Lord Christ, the whole stock of Christ is yours, in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom, and riches and grace besides: For *he pleased the Father that in him all fulnesse should dwell, col. 1. 19.* Now beloved, when wee have a great stock to trade upon, there may be a great deal of doing; and for lack of stock there cannot bee so much dealings; so as there is a fulnesse of stock in Christ, so there may bee a fulnesse of activenesse in you; especially when Christ doth give you with that stock of life and strength, a faculty and ability to act that stock, when hee gives not only strength, but wisdom to manage such strength unto advantage.

Besides, Christ is such a way, that the businesse that you have to doe in the way, shall be done by him exactly, compleatly, and neatly. Beloved, there is never a School-master in the world can teach the perfect trade of walking uprightly, but Christ alone: Therefore in the new covenant, you shall finde this one of the maine clauses, *They shall be all taught of God*, that is, that Christ that is God and man, that is the Mediatour of the new covenant.

Men are but bunglers that are taught by any other but God. Wee that are the Ministers of the Gospel, leave you dunces in Christianity, in matters of practise untill the Lord Iesus Christ come into that Ministry, and by his Spirit teach your spirits; and then when he comes you shall be exact in skilfulnesse, *I am wiser then my teachers, said David*; so when Christ comes to teach you, you shall be wise as your Schoolmaster. Now a Schoolmaster cannot make true Latine, the Scholar will hardly doe it; If the Scrivener cannot write well, the Scholar will make but crooked clawes, as we use to say. Beloved, learn this truth if you will bee exact in the Christian Schoolship, in the mysteries of Christ; goe to schoole to Christ, that is, take Christ for your Christ, waite on this Christ to instruct you, to direct you, make you skilfull, then shall you be infinitely more exact, then by running to any other teacher in the world. Christ then you see is such a way, by which we attain to a quicker riddance of all the businesse we have to doe in this way, then any other course besides.

Consider in the next place, as Christ is a way to quick riddance, so hee is a *sure way, a firme way, a hard way*; there is no feare of sinking while we keep this causeway, this road, as I may call it. Good rain makes some clayie, boggy wayes sink both cart and man, and all may stick fast and perish in them: As for Christ, he is a way so rocky, that all the rain that falls upon this way, it runs away, it makes it never a jot the more sinking. A way may be as firme, as secure in the greatest storme.

shall be in the fairest weather. I mean thus, *Christ* will not deceive, every thing in the world will deceive a man, but *Christ* will never deceive him; you have observed sometimes I know, some places that have been as green and faire to the eye, as the best way that ever men set foot in; but set your foot into them, and you sink up to the neck, they are boggy quagmires. My beloved, be not offended, I must tell you, while men make their own righteousnesse and obedience their way to the Father, they seem to be in a fair green way, which promiseth firmnesse: but he that dares to trust himselfe in the way of his owne righteousnesse to the Father, he shall finde himselfe so sinking, that if *Christ* come not to pluck him out, he shall sink over head and eares: Ye that goe to the Father, and think to set your selves in the presence of the Father, and stand in the delight of the Father in the way of your own righteousnesse, shame and confusion of face will cover you before you are aware. *Paul* durst not be found in it, but looked upon it as dung; dung you know is sinking, the righteousnesse of *Paul* he saw it, he knew it, it did not only sink in the nostrils of God as dung, but was a sinking way, he himselfe could never keep his footing to goe to the Father by it, therefore he saith, *Phil. 3. 8, 9.* I account all but dung that I may be in *Christ*, and be found in him, not having mine owne righteousnesse, that is according to the Law, but the righteousness that is by faith in *Christ*. Let a man venture himselfe upon *Christ*, as he is a way to the Father, and he shall not sinke. Feare not, saith *Christ*, in *Mat. 41. 10.* feare not, I am with thee, be not dismayed,

I am thy God : I will helpe thee, I will strengthen thee,
 will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness
 I will uphold thee. Beloved, All the righteousness
 of man is not able to uphold him ; nay , the
 is that in mans righteousness that will sink him.
 Where there is sinfulness in mens actions,
 their righteousness , that sinfulness is enough
 trip up their heels, to lay them in the dirt, to lay
 them flat upon their backs , that they cannot rise
 again. Let men come before God with this righte-
 ousness, if God find fault with that in which they
 present themselves, they are gone for ever : Let
 man keep the whole law , and at last fall in one point,
 guilty of all . See then how firmly he stands, that
 built upon a rock. He that builds upon Christ
 builds upon a rock, nothing can shake him : When
 doth transgresse, it is true, but Christ doth carry
 way his transgression, that before it comes to the
 eye of the Father it is gone into the wilderness,
 casts it behinds his back , he throws it into the bottom
 the sea, it is blotted out, as the Text speaks. So that
 I say, as water falling upon a rocky way , glides
 way as fast as it falls, that the way is as hard as be-
 fore the rain fell , and a man may stand as firm
 there as before ; so all our sinfulness while we are
 in the way Christ, as thick as it falls, Christ hath
 made himselfe such a way, that it passeth off from
 us to him, and from him also. We have garments
 made now a dayes, that if rain falls it will glide
 a man, and so not soake into him. Beloved, Christ
 is our garment , all the wet that falls upon us,
 lights on him , it falls from us to Christ himselfe,
 that is, all our transgressions , when once we are

in Christ, passe from us to him. Now hee hath a garment as well for himselfe as for us ; that though our sins fall from us to him , yet they remaine not upon him. The Lord indeed laid the iniquities of all upon Christ , but he passed away all this iniquity from himselfe, by making full satisfaction to the Father. If Christ should have our sinfulness remaining upon him when it glides from us, hee himselfe would be a sinking way to us. If Christ were sinfull in the eyes of God , we could never be cleane in his eyes : it is through his cleanness we become cleane. Now Christ is such a way to believers that receive him, that he tooke away their sins from them, bore them all, and left them in his own grave , and raised himselfe without them. So here is no sinne charged upon believers ; nor upon Christ : it was laid upon Christ, it is true, but Christ hath cast it off, and sweat it out, it is evanesced and gone from him too.

Thus you see Christ is a firm way, a secure way to a person, he shall not stir, he shall not be moved as long as he keeps Christ to be his way. Once again , as Christ is a firm way to believers ; so Christ is a most pleasant way : I say a most delightful , a most refreshing and recreating way, Christ is a way as it were all strewed with flowers, there is nothing but mirth and sweetnes in Christ. In the third of the Proverbs of Solomon, and the 17 verse, there you shall find Christ spoken of under the notion of Wisedome; of whom it is affirmed that *all her wayes are wayes of pleasure*, not only pleasant wayes, but wayes of pleasure ; as if there were nothing but pleasures, as

if the wayes were substantiall pleasure, or full of all manner of delight. Doe but observe a notable expression in *E'ay* 35. He speakes as if he had been an Apostle in the time or after the time of Christ. You may see by him what a pleasant way Christ is to all those that chuse him for their way: In the first verse you have him expressing himselfe thus *The wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoyce and blossom as the Rose.* He means thus, That whereas men lived as in the wilderness, and in a desert place, that is, in a sad and solitary condition, they shall be translated in such a way, into such a pleasant way, that there shall be gladnesse and rejoycing, there shall be the blossom of roses in this way. And to illustrate the pleasantnesse of the way into which Christ translates his, by translating them into himselfe: he goes on in the second verse, *It shall blossom abundantly and rejoyce even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall bee given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God: nothing but pleasure, it compared to Lebanon, the sweetest place in the world, to Carmel and Sharon, places of great delight, such shall be the way chalked out, and held forth unto the believers. Look into the last verse of the Chapter, and see what a way of pleasure Christ is unto all those that receive him: And the ransomed of the Lord shall returne and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtaine joy and gladnes, and sorrow and sighing shall flie away. Be hold the mirth that is in the way of Christ! there is nothing but joy and gladnesse.*

Object. But some will say, Beleevers find it otherwise, there is no such joy and gladnesse; but they are often oppressed with sadnesse and heaviness of spirit.

Answer I answer, there is not one fit of sadnesse in any beleever whatsoever, but hee is out of the way Christ; I mean, fits of sadnesse in respect of his jealousnesse of his present, and future estate he is out of the way of Christ, hee enjoyeth not him as he ought, while he is in such fits. Therefore the apostle puts beleevers upon rejoycing alwayes, *Rejoyce in the Lord alwayes, and again I say, rejoyce, Phil. 4.* There is matter of nothing but joy in him, while there is mournings in beleevers. there are meltings in those mournings, and more joy in the mourning of a beleever, then in all the mirth of a ticked man. I appeal to you, beloved, that have had melted hearts, whether you have not found a secret content in your meltings, that you rather are the change of that mourning, then that you are troubled with it.

That which is a most common proverb in the world, is most certainly true in this present case, *Some men for joy doe weep, others for sorrow sing.* I say, beleevers weep for joy, and never mourne more kindly then when they see the joy of the holy host in the freeness and fulnesse of the Lord Christ poured out upon them. There is never a more kindly mourning for sin, then that mourning when the soule is satisfied of forgiveness of sins. I say, the soule is first satisfied with forgiveness of sins, before there is that reall kindly mourning in those that are beleevers. You have heard
of

of some persons I know ; that have been condemned to be executed; who at the Scaffold have been so obdurate and stiff-necked, that not a cry, not a teare came from them, yet just when their necks went to the block, upon the comming of the pardon, when they were discharged, they that could not weep a teare, nor be affected with their estate, no sooner doe they see a pardon, and themselves acquitted, but they melt all into teares : so it is with beleevvers. the more they see Christ in the pardon of sin, and the love of God in Christ to receive and embrace them, the more they melt. Therefore Solomon hath a notable expression : *Thine enemy hunger (saith he) give him bread, and if he thirst give him drink : so shalt thou heap coales of fire upon his head, Prov. 25. 21, 22* As much as if hee should have said, Kindnesse is the best way in the world to melt the obduratest wretch. Thus God deales with men through Christ, hee gives them bread when they are hungry, and drinke when they are thirsty, and thus doth hee heap coales of fire upon their heads, that is, he melts them.

So, beloved, you see what an admirable way Christ is, all full of pleasure; there is the Spirit of Christ to make musick unto a Soule. *Speak comfortably unto my people*, saith God, and this is the office of the Spirit, and the Spirit doth nothing else but speak comfortable things. Beloved, Christ is a way, as the cellars of wine are unto Drunkards, that are never better then when they are at the cup; and therefore no place like the cellar, where there is fulnesse of wine, alwayes to be drinking and drinking : I say, Christ is such a way, and

let me not be offensive to say so, for the Church speaks in the same language, *Cant. 2.4, 5.* He brought me (saith she) into his wine-cellar, stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love

Beloved, Christ hath such variety of delicacies served in continually, and such sweetnesse in this variety; that the soule is no longer satisfied then it is with Christ. Here is not staying with cups, much lesse with halfe cups, but staying with *so* whole flagons; there is a kind of inebriating, whereby Christ doth in a spirituall sense, make the believers that keep him company, spiritually drunke, he overcomes them with his wine. *In that day* (saith the Lord) *I will make a feast of fat things; full of marrow, of wine well refined upon the lees, Isaiah 25. 6.* Here is abundance, it is a feast, and a feast of fat things full of marrow, which is the best of fatnesse, a feast of wine well refined upon the lees, pure and clarified wine: This is the entertaining Christ hath for those that keepe him company.

The Psalmist hath an excellent expression to this purpose, speaking of the excellency of Christ, with he, therefore the sonnes of men shall put their trust under the shadow of his wings, *Psal. 36. 7, 8.* Well, what followes? when they put their trust under the shadow of his wings, that is; when they shall make the voyce of him to be their way; they shall bee abundantly satisfied with the fatnesse of thy house, thou shalt make them drinke of the rivers of thy pleasure, but thine, saith he, with thee is the well of life. Here are not only pleasures, but Rivers of pleasures; Here not onely life, but a well of life; such dain-

ties and delicates, such curiosities and rarities as the world can never shew, nor see, nor taste. VVe read in the *Revelation* of a *white Stone*, and a *new name* written in it, which none could know nor read, but he that had it. This I am sure of, there are delights in Christ none can possibly reach unto, but those to whom Christ doth give himselfe, and those that receive him: therefore our Saviour, *Matth. 11.* he thanks his Father thus, *I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent of the world, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, because it pleased thee.* And it is worth the observing, hee doth not thanke him that hee hath revealed them to the mighty, and great, and wise, that abound in all manner of abilities farre above others, but unto babes: There is much in that phrase, a babe is the weakest of all sorts of men, implying thus much, that the weakest of all believers, in the body of Christ, I may say, the feeblest babe, shall partake of such hidden things, such excellencies of Christ, that the world shall never be able to dive into, reach to, or comprehend him; and Christ himselfe taketh such delight in their societies, that he takes occasion to blesse God the Father, that he is so large in his sake to doe so much for them above what he did for others: So you see Christ is also a *pleasant way*, a way of exceeding great content and delight. There is yet one thing more.

Christ is a way, of all the wayes in the world the most *easy* to be hit; there is no hardnesse to find it out, no difficulty to finde out a progresse in it. Many wayes may lead unto a comfortable

But there are so many crosse wayes to turn men out, that so they lose themselves. In the way of works a man may presently lose himself; there is not one work he doth, but he commits sin in it, and so hee presently steps aside and hath lost himself, and must begin againe, and goe about, and come where hee was at the first. God will never let any soule come neere unto him, that comes to him with any sin whatsoever; if there be any one sin, all must be undone, a man must begin again as they say. I speak this of the righteousness of man, while he makes that his way to God: Therefore Christ is the way, there is no stepping aside in Christ, no losing of Christ, there cannot be an error committed, which when a man comes to the Father by Christ, shall be taken notice of as an error from that person: So, I say, it is the easiest way in the world to bee hit. It is true what *Peter* saith of *Paul*, *Many things in his writings are very hard to be understood*; But mark, in the Gospel things that doe pertain unto the justification of a sinner, they are written in such great letters, such plain letters, that he that runs may reade them. Doe but observe a few expressions which doe shew how easie it is to hit the way, Christ himself being the way: In *Esay* 35. 8. is a notable place for this purpose, *A high way there shall be, &c.* and in the latter end of the verse, *the way-faring men, though fools, shall not erre therein.* The Psalmist tells us, *that the commandments of God give light unto the eyes*: The Gospel out of question doth make the simple wise. There are some things you know, that you are able to teach to fools, though you are not able

to teach them deep mysteries, Beloved, Christ the way to salvation, makes himself so plain to those that come unto him, that though they be very fools, yet they shall not mistake nor erre; nay, though fools and wayfaring men: a wise man, if he be a wayfaring man, that is, a stranger may misse his way; but if a man be a stranger, and a fool too, it must be a very easie way that hee should hit. A fool may hit a way in which hee hath long conversed, which strangers may easily misse. But, saith the holy Ghost, the way that Christ is made to men, is such a way, that *fooles, though wayfaring men, shall not erre therein.*

Againe, Christ is the way, and such a way as is a spacious, large, elbow-rooms way, as I may so say: There is abundance of largenesse and elbow-room in Christ the way to the Father; therefore Christ himselfe saith, *If the Sonne make you free, then are you free indeed*: When Christ comes to bring liberty to men, then are they at liberty indeed. Therefore it is said, *Gal. 5. 1. Stand fast in the liberty wherein christ hath made you free, and bee not intangled again with the yoke of bondage.* When a man enters into Christ, he enters into liberty and freedom. There is a contracted bondage in every way and condition, but in Christ alone.

Obiect. But some will say, How doe you answer that place in *Matth. 7. 14. Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* How can Christ be such a way of liberty, when the way is said to be an exceeding strait and narrow way?

Answer. I answer: first, marke the words that

goe before, Christ speaks not this simply, but comparatively, the way is strait and narrow in comparison of that he spake of : for in the verse before, hee hath these words, *Broad is the way, and wide is the gate that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that enter in thereto* : then hee comes in afterwards with these words, *strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life* : that is, in comparison of the vast liberty and scope the world takes to walk in, and the vast rangings of their vain hearts, it is a strait way : but simply, considering him in himself, he is a large way, large in respect of the number that go, and in respect of the elbow-room in it. In a narrow way few can goe a breast, it will hold but a few men; but in open broad wayes many may go together. Marke now, how Christ is a large and spacious way, *Hee died not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world*, 1 John 2.2. See what a spaciousnesse there is in Christ, that the whole world, the multitudes of people of all sorts in the world may have elbow-roome in this way.

But secondly, *strait is the gate, and narrow is the way* : what is this straitnesse ? To this question perhaps you will answer, *a strict, austere and severe life* : a precisenesse and exactnesse, without giving to a mans selfe any liberty whatsoever : This is the straitnesse of the way that leadeth unto life. But beloved, give me leave to adde, I confesse the stricter Christians can walke, the better; and Christ will more and more confirm the life of a beleever unto a holy exactnesse : but under favour, I conceive this is not the meaning of the

Text here, that by the straitnesse of the way is here meant the strictnes of conversation. But rather the meaning is this, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way*, that is, it hath not that latitude in it that generally men thinke it hath. What is that? Men generally thinke, that besides Christ, there is something more in the way that leadeth to life, and that is a mans owne righteousness, not only Christ, but a mans owne righteousness joyntly together with Christ; these are the way to salvation. This is the conceit of many men.

But, I say, it is strait and narrow in this regard, that all a mans owne righteousness must bee cut out of the way, it must be so narrow, that there must be nothing in the way but Christ: when a mans owne righteousness is taken into the way besides Christ, then it is a broader way then Christ allowes of; he allowes onely that way to be himselfe: And that this is the meaning, seems to me by the words that follow. Beware (saith Christ in the next words) of false Prophets that come in sheepes cloathing, that inwardly are ravening wolves: It seems in this, Christ gives a warning how to beware of false prophets, by telling men that *strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth to life*. And what false prophets were they? If you consult with Luke, *Acts* 15. 1, 34. you shall understand who the prophets were, and withall the meaning of this Text: There you shall finde that these false prophets were they that troubled the Church, and occasioned the Assembly, the first Councell that ever was: Some (say the Councell) *that went from us, have troubled you with words, subverting*

souls, saying you must be circumcised, and keep the Law, or else you cannot be saved. These are the false Prophets Christ meant, that would make the observation of the Law of Moses and Circumcision to be co-partners with Christ as a way to salvation, to whom say the Apostles, we gave no such commandment, you shall find that in the Epistle to the Gal. & Col. all the Apostles contestations were with such false Prophets that come in sheeps cloathing, they were not false Prophets that came in wolves habits, that are openly prophane and scandalous, they can deceive no man, they shew themselves to all; but they are false Prophets in sheepes cloathing, that is, they seeme to be sheep, they seem to be austere, they seem to preach nothing but righteousness and holinesse; but yet they are ravenous Wolves. How so? They make men build upon a mans owne righteousness, and not upon Christ, and so destroy poore souls: These are those the Apostle bids us beware of, Gal. 3. 1. Who (saith, he) hath bewitched you, that yee should not obey the truth before whose eyes Iesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you? This onely would I leane of you, received yee the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith? having begun in the Spirit, are yee now made perfect by the flesh? Thus hee argues against the false Prophets, that will establish the righteousness of man as the way to life.

In a word or two, there are two things more considerable, I will but touch them, Christ is a shadow way: In hot weather men much thirst after shady places: you know the case of Jonah, when he was scorched with heat, God provided for

him a gourd, and how comfortable was it unto him? Christ is a *shady way*, *Hide thy selfe for a little moment till the indignation be over past*, saith Christ, *Ela* 26.29 When the scorching gloomes of Gods wrath breaks out into the world, *Jesus Christ* is a hiding place, *till the indignation be over past*.

Againe, *Christ* is a *quiet way*, there are some private wayes men affect, because there is but little disturbance: but in some other wayes, especially in some common road wayes, there is nothing but quarrelling and revelling; But *Christ* he is a *quiet way*, all is peace while you are in *Christ*. The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. *Rom. 15. 13*. Believe, and there is all peace for you bring Justified (*Rom 5. 1.*) that is, while you are in *Christ* to justifie you, there is peace with God through our Lord *Jesus Christ*: and nothing but peace. I see the time is past, something else I should have considered, especially the ground why *Christ* is such a way, but I shall rather break off abruptly.

SERMON

 SERMON V.

 CHRIST S
 Preheminance.

Coloss. 1. 18.

That in all things he might have the preheminance.

His admirable sweet and comfortable
 Apostle of the Gentiles, makes it the
T master-peece of his Apostleship, to
 wooe and win people unto Christ: We
 are the Ambassadors of Christ, beseeching
 you in Christs stead to be reconciled unto God: As in all
 the rest of his Epistles, so especially in this, and
 more especially in this first Chapter, he shewes an
 excellent faculty he hath this way, in this businesse
 of wooing people unto Christ: He doth observe
 what doth most effectually take with people to
 beguile their spirits, as he speakes himselfe, with
 a kind of craft to catch their affections; especially
 if you observe from the 15 ver. of this chap. and so
 forwards, you shall find, the Apostle meets with
 every thing that is most enamouring, and taking
 with people. The world is mightily taken with
 beauty, with compleatnesse of person: Oh saith
 one, let me have a beautifull person, it is no matter
 how poore: If beauty be so taking, then saith the
 Apostle,

Apostle, I will present a rare peece indeed to you, in presenting Christ, for such is the beauty of Christ that there is no beauty like his; he, saith he, *is the image of the invisible God*: that is one commendation of his. But will some say, so is every man as well as Christ; what rarenesse is there in Christ in this regard? It's true, man is after the Image of God, but where the Apostle calls him the image of the invisible God, he speaks in an eminent manner, therefore you shall finde him expressing himselfe more fully, in setting forth the rare beauty of Christ, in *Heb. 1. 3.* he *is the brightnesse of his glory*, saith the Apostle there, *and the expresse Image of his person*. He was the Image of God to the life, as I may say, he is as like him, you cannot know one from the other. He hath so the perfections of God, that there can be nothing liker then he is unto the Father, expressing the brightnesse of his glory. But there are some, though they doe finde beauty, yet that alone will not take; besides it, some persons look for lineage, what stock a person is of: Is he come of a good house, of a noble and royall blood? Blood is a great matter, especially with high spirits: Well if this will take, then there is no stock like this of Christ: he is of the greatest house in the world; *the first begotten*, saith the Apostle, *of all creatures*: He comes of that great house of God himselfe.

Object. And so doth the creature too, you will say, what rarity is there in Christ above the creatures, they all come of God.

Ans. But beloved, the creatures are of, and in the house of God, as the Apostle speakes of *Moses* in *Exod. 3. 5.* as servants in the house: Christ as a Sonne,

Christ

Christ is not only of a royall house, but he is born of that royall house: he is the naturall Son of the Father, *this is my beloved Son*; so that he is of the very blood royall, as I may so speak with reverence; and he is not a younger brother in this house neither, for he is the *first begotten* of the house, that is a great matter among persons, to marry the heire of a family; so he is: nay, more then that, he is the *only begotten* of the house, there is never another in all the family; and that is a great encouragement, he is the *only begotten Sonne of God*, full of grace and truth, saith the Apostle, *John 1. 14*. So that if men goe all the world over, to find a match in the noblest house, they will never meet with such an one as this of the Sonne of God. Thus hee commends him: but yet some are ready to say, Suppose he be of a noble house, he may be in disgrace, and hee may live privately and have no authority, nor be able to doe any great matters. If this will doe, then the Apostle commends Christ as the rarest, in respect of his power and Authority: *All things were made by him, and for him*, that is, all things in the world are at his command and beck, they bow unto him, they stoop before him, at his Name every knee shall bow, both of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; every thing goes through his hands.

I, but it may be hee is in disgrace in the Court, that is a blurre unto him. No, he is not so great in the countrey, but hee is as great in the court too; for, as hee hath the whole world under his power, so he hath the great King at his beck. Hee commands in heaven as hee doth upon earth: there is nothing

nothing he can aske of the Father, but it is answered; he hath never a nay; if any come to be¹ suited to him to put up a Petition, he is sure to speed.

There is a great man now, but for all this, he may be but a poore man, though he have never so great power in Court and Countrey, if he be poor, I shall live but poorly with him; if he were rich, and had abundance of wealth, then there were some hope of some incouragement to take such an one. Christ is not greater in court and countrey, then he is rich in treasure; so you shall finde in the 19. verse of this Chap. *It pleased the Father, saith the Text that in him all fulnesse should dwell*; all fulnesse, all the treasures of wisdom are hid in him, he hath the whole world to dispose of, therefore silver and gold are not to be compared unto him.

I, but yet there is one thing more; though he hath riches, yet he may prove a niggard, close fistred, he may keep all to himself, the party that hath him may be poore enough, for want of contribution: But, beloved, he is not more rich himself, then he is liberall to contribute of his treasure, to make those that are his, sharers to the uttermost of all that he hath. Therefore in the tenth verse of the second chapter (for he followes this subject all along) the Apostle tells us, not only, as in verse. *that in him dwells the fulnesse of the Godhead bodily*, but also in ver. 10. *You are compleat in him*, who is the head of the body. The head you know is not a niggard, what fulnesse the head hath, it communicates to every part: Christ is a head, and a head of fulnesse, the fulnesse of the Godhead. And the head is not sparing, but disperseth, and scatters

ereth all that is in it, so that every member shall have a share; and not a share meerly to keep life and soule together, as we say, but a share to make a person compleat: so if any persons in the world would devise what they could desire in such a one to match themselves unto: you shall finde that a creature cannot frame those perfections in its fancy, which it would enjoy; I say, men cannot frame any perfections, to come so neer the reall perfections of Christ, as a shadow comes neer the substance. You have a Proverb, That Bachelours Wives, and Maides children must be creatures; that is, their fancy will devise what kinde of one they will have, and what kinds of perfections they desire: Let the fancy devise what kinde of perfection it can, to please sense, Christ shall really out-strip in perfection all these fancies, more then a substance doth out-strip a shadow, as said.

Now the Apostle having delivered himselfe thus fully by way of wooing unto Christ, he comes to close in the words of the text, and so declares the end and purpose for which hee doth set out Christ in so many excellencies as he did; the end of this, was, *That in all things he might have the preheminence*, that he may be taken for the most excellent thing in the world, that all things may be re-
 fected, rather then he; and so he set above every thing in the world: so then, the point in briebe is this.

In regard of the rare excellencies, and perfections, and usefulness of Christ, which is incomparable, he ought to have the preheminence in all things.

In handling of which wee shall consider, First what the preheminence is which Christ ought to have. Secondly, why hee should have the preheminence in all these. And then a word or two of application.

First, what is this *preheminency* that Christ should have. I will not insist upon the word *preheminence*: you all know, to give a person or thing the *preheminence* is no more but this, to set up such a person or thing above all others, and specially for those uses and purposes wee have occasion to make use of them for. I say, to chuse such a person before any other, as a person who can better and more certainly bring to passe what wee desire, than any else can. So that in brief, to give Christ the preheminence, is to set up Christ above all things in the world, to chuse Christ rather than any thing, for every use and purpose to make use of him. I say, above and before any thing whatsoever, as apprehending him infinitely more able and sufficient unto such purposes, than any thing else is.

But more particularly, that we might the better see what the *preheminence* is, that Christ ought to have of us; you must know beloved, that there is an infallible pattern drawn out unto us, according unto which we are to write our copy. In general therefore, the *preheminence* wee are to give unto Christ is the *preheminence* that the Father hath given unto him before us, and revealed unto us, that we may in our way, give the same to him: Therefore we must consider a while what *preheminence* the Father gives unto Christ. You shall find beloved, that

the Father doth in many things infinitely set up Christ above all things in the world : Hee chose Christ before all things in the world. For iastance : first, the Father he gives Christ the *preheminence* of his *affection*, his love and his delight. There is nothing in the world the Father loves and delights in, as he doth in his Son. All the delight the creatures have from the Father, are but beames from this Sun of righteounesse, in the eyes of God. That Christ hath more abundance of the Fathers love, then any other creature in the world hath. I will give you but one passage or two, for the clearing of it : look into *Prov.* 8. 30. 31. By the way you must note; first, that *wisedome* spoken of in this Chapter, is generally understood by all, to be Christ alone, and that which is indeed affirmed of *wisedome*, can be affirmed of none but *Christ*. Among other particulars note these two, to manifest it is *Christ*, and that he hath that choice affection of the Father. *I was set up* (saith *wisedome* here,) *from everlasting*. I was set up from everlasting : none was everlasting but the Father to set him up; none could be everlasting but the Son to be set up. All creatures had their beginning and being in time. Now observe the affection of the father in this : I was set up from everlasting; it doth properly set forth the nature of *preheminence*, *wisdome* speaks of many things; God did lay the foundations of the earth, the sea, and severall creatures : but I was set up from everlasting; as much as if hee should say, these have their place in the world, but my place is above them, in the *affection* of God. And that this setting up is meant of Gods *affection* to Christ above

above any other creature in the world, mark what hee speaks in the 30. verse of the same chapter; *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, I was daily his delight in the habitable parts of the earth. I was by him as one brought up with him;* the meaning is, Christ is here considered as the darling of the Father. All the creatures in the world are brought up with God in a large sense; but he was brought up with him, that is to say, hee was the very fondling of him. When *Abraham* had an *Isaac*, *Isaac* must be brought up with *Abraham*, and *Ishmael* must be sent abroad; *Ishmael* shall have a portion, but shall not be brought up with him. This shewes the difference of affection to one before the other. Bringing up with him is an argument of affection: *I was brought up with him, I was daily his delight.* Hee made other creatures, but Christ was only his delight, that is, he could not look upon any creature in the world, and delight in it, but this delight hee had in his Sonne, did swallow up the delight hee had in any creature. In brief, beloved, the love and delight of the Father hath a prebeminence in the Son, that the truth is, there is no creature in the world doth actually participate of one jot of the love of the Father, but by the Sonne, and for the Sonnes sake, as the Sonne becomes the channell; or rather the spring that receives from the Ocean of Gods love. That love the creature participates of, it participates of it by Christ; you know when we partake of sweet streames that run in rivers and channels, we are beholding to the spring for the stream; and what the spring doth receive, that it doth convey to the channell from the

cean. The heart of God, as I may so speake, is the Ocean, the first rise of all love to the creature, *Christ* is the *spring* that first receives from him, and then through him is all love diffused to the creature.

You know beloved, that by nature we are children of wrath, subjects of the hatred and displeasure of God, being at enmity with God : How doe wee partake of God againe ? *God is in Christ*. saith the Text, *reconciling the world unto himselfe* : so that this uniting againe to the Father, in the participating of the love of the Father comes againe in Christ; you that were sometimes as farre off, hath he made nigh by the blood of Christ, as far off, in respect of the affection of God, in regard of our sinfull nature; but made nigh, that is reduced againe into the affection of God by the blood of Christ. Here is the preheminence of Christ above the creature, he hath infinitely more of affection, he is the *spring* and fountaine of that affection, that the creature partakes of. Now then, we are to give this preheminence unto Christ, that he reveals this unto us, that so we may see the pattern according to which we are to walke, and doe likewise : Wee should so make Christ the choycest in our affection; we can never place love and affection more orderly, then by placing affection according to the pattern God sets. So farre as wee affect according to God, and imitate him in affecting; so farre are our affections placed aright for : to put the cart before the horse, to affect things in a lower degree, above things that are higher, to give preheminence to things that should come behind, and to bring that behind which should have preheminence, is the disorder of a mans affection; it

swarves from the patterne and example of God himself : So then, Christ hath the preheminence over all persons with us, when hee is really promoted and exalted above all creatures in the world in our affection : *Whom have I in heaven but thee ?* said David, *I desire nothing in the earth in comparison of thee.* Here is the preheminence of affection given unto Christ when there is nothing in the world in affection comparable unto him. You shall see this like in the *Can ti-les*, the Church discoursing about her beloved, the strangers aske her, *What is thy beloved more then another beloved ?* Shee answered againe, *my beloved is the chief of ten thousands :* Here is the preheminence ascribed. When the people of Israel heard David say, he would goe to warre ; they came upon him with , *Thou art more worth then ten thousand of us :* here was the preheminence given to the King so beloved, I say, when in affection Christ is promoted as the chief among ten thousands ; nay, all things in the world be set with Christ, or Christ, they are trash to him ; then I say , is given the reall preheminence unto Christ , when in affection in regard of the excellencies of Christ , hee is above every thing in the world.

Secondly, the Father gives Christ this preheminence besides, namely, in a farre more enlarged and multiplied proportion of gifts and parts above all creatures. Christ is the Benjamin of his Father, whose messie is more then five times as much as the rest of the brethren. The Apostle in *Philippians* tells us , *That God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name :* and *Heb. i. 9.* he hath anointed his Christ, hee hath anointed him with

oyle of gladnesse above his fellowes : You shall find, beloved, that God doth promote Christ even above Angels, the first and second Chapter to the Hebrewes insists mainly upon this point, in how many respects God doth exalt Christ above Angels, To which of his Angels said he at any time, thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee ? But I say, principally in respect of parts and gifts, you shall find beloved, that, that which God bestowes upon Christ, is farre more then he bestowes upon any creature. In John 3 the latter end, he received the spirit, saith the Text, not by measure ; wee receive drop by drop of that we have, we have it but scantily to that which Christ hath, he hath received the spirit not by measure. The truth is, Christ receives a proportionable gift as head ; now a head doth not only require to have what should supply it selfe of spirit ; but such a proportion as is sufficient to and all the parts, from the head to the foot ; therefore it must needs have more then the severall parts themselves ; we need no more then for our own sustentation : Christ is our head, and therefore as a head must have the preheminence, that is, a larger proportion of gifts then others, for others are but to find themselves, but he is to maintain himselfe, and to maintain the whole body too. Thus should we give Christ the preheminence, to which the Father hath exalted him above creatures, giving unto him more then unto creatures : nay, giving unto creatures all they have by him ; I say, so should we give him the preheminence likewise. Whither should a creature goe for water, but unto the living ? Whither should the Creature goe for

strength, but unto the fountaine of strength? Is it not a derogation unto Christ, that all fulnesse should be in him alone, and wee to forsake this fountain of fulnesse to goe unto broken Cisternes that will hold no water? Mark it well, beloved, as often as ever you run to any creature in any necessity or exigence, either before you goe to Christ or in stead of going to Christ: so often you rob Christ of that *preheminence* that God hath given unto him, and you should give unto him. If any creature in the world seem in your fancie to have a helpfullnesse, a likelyhood of strength, and a likelyhood of supply; and this likelyhood of supply seems more likely then a likelyhood of supply from Jesus Christ, so farre is the *preheminence* of Christ brought down, and the creature hath begotten a *preheminence* above him. Look to it beloved, you run to the creature to the world for this, and that, and t'other thing, and think it must come this way, or it will never come while Christ is wholly neglected of you, and you that are of a more spirituall straine, then when you are under any tryall, run to any grace, any temper of spirit in you, or any qualifications, or any performances you can tender, and look after them as the thing that most likely will furnish you with what you want, while you look faintly and coldly upon Christ, and the *freewill* that grace that Christ brings along with him, so long you deny unto Christ the *preheminence* those parts and gifts God hath given unto him above other things. If God had given unto all creatures, more then unto Christ, you might rather have sought unto them then unto Christ; you might

rather look wishly for supply in them then in *Christ*; but if *Christ* hath more then any creature in the world; nay, if *Christ* be made the sole and onely fountaine of supply, he being made the fountaine of supply, whether for the spirits, or the outward man: then must hee have this *preheminence* to be sought unto rather then any thing in the world, for the furnishing of you, and supplying you with that that must come from this fountain

Thirdly, the Father gives *Christ* this *preheminence* to be the foundation to beare up all things: the Apostle tells us, *Other foundation can no man lay, then that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 3. 11.* And in *Heb. 1. 2.* speaking of *Christ*, as the brightnesse of the Father; he saith also, *That he doth uphold all things by the word of his power*: God then gives to *Christ* this *preheminence* to be the foundation: the creature therefore robs *Christ* of his *preheminence*, when *Christ* must not be the foundation to beare up all things, but other foundations shall be laid; as if there were a firmer or securer bottome to beare up, then *Christ* himself. In *Esay. 28. 16.* you shall see there what *preheminence* the Father gives unto *Christ* as the foundation, *Behold, saith he, I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tryed stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation*: Saint Peter hath an addition hereunto (*2 Pet. 4. 5.*) *an elect, precious stone, a living stone, unto whom coming, yee as lively stones are built up a spirituall house*: Mark what *preheminence* he hath given to *Christ*, to be such a kinde of foundation to uphold all things.

To give a touch of these things, first, hee is a stone, the firmest bottome in the world, for the security

of that which is laid upon it from sinking: give Christ this preheminence too. Beloved, to looke upon him, and consider him as a Stone, an unmoveable Rock; such a Rock as you may may sit down with this confidence, that though heaven and earth shake and come together, whatsoever is laid upon him shall never totter.

Here is a *tried stone*, saith the Text, that's more then barely a Stone. Beloved, you know what preheminence those medicines have, that have a *probatum est* over written, that is an approved medicine, and upon triall found to be good. You know what preheminence that armour of prooffe hath, when a Musket is discharged upon it; and the bullet pierceth it not, this is of preheminence above others; Christ is a *tried stone*, there is a *probatum est* written over the head of this stone, he was tried by the Father, hee is tried by believers, he is tried by his enemies, and a *probatum est* is written over his head, that hee is a stone with a witnesse, tried by the Father, first in his secret councell, hee found that nothing in the world could stand under that businesse which was to be done; hee was tried by him on earth, he laid all the sinnes of the men upon earth upon him, and yet they could not make his back to breake; here he was tried, he made him a But for all his wrath, the whole quiver of his envenomed Arrowes, yet he stood to it; he was tried by believers, they have put him to it to the utmost; hee is tried by his very enemies, who finde him a grindstone to grind them to powder, who find him a bulwark of security for all such whom they oppose.

Hee is not only a tryed Stone, but a *precious* tried Stone, saith the Apostle, that is more, hee gives him this preheminence, to be a *precious* Stone. You know when the holy Ghost sets forth the glory of the Church in the *Revelation*, under the name and title of such and such pretious Stones, of which the Foundation, the Gates and the Walls were made, it is set forth in the way of excellencie, that they are precious Stones: Here, I say, is preheminencie, that Christ is a *precious* Stone, as well as a tried Stone; precious to God, nothing so delectable as what he doth; precious to beleevvers, precious in respect of his beauty, no beauty like his: precious in respect of his value, nothing of worth comparable to him. *The fruit of the body for the the sin of the soul: thousands of rame, and ten thousand rivers of oyle, come not neer in value to the ransome of the soul: but Christ hath ransomed it, and is raised from the grave.* All the creatures in the world gathered up together, could never make up a sum to buy out the soule, therefore he is precious, precious in value, and precious in worth. All receipts in the world spend out their vertue, and are dry things to the vertue and excellency of Christ, such is the vertue that is found in Christ, that let him but come and lay his mouth to the foot where a thorne is, hee drawes out the thorne: Nay, hee layes his mouth to the plague-sore of the soule, he suckes out the venome. It is true, hee drinkes his own bane for the present, it cost him his life, but hee suckes out the poyson from the person that makes use of him.

There are many precious stones, they say, that

are of admirable vertue, but yet none is compared unto Christ; he is a *sure foundation*, saith the Prophet, that is more, not only *precious* but *sure*; so sure that lay what load you can lay upon the back of Christ, he stoops not: and therefore he was excellently typified by those brazen Pillars in *Solomons Temple*: they were made of brasse, of purpose to shew their strength, whereon the whole weight of the Porch of the Temple lay. Christ hath this *preeminence* given unto him of the Father, that although an infinite weight were to be imposed upon him, yet hee should goe away with all. And in this regard *Samson* was a type of him, who being barred up in the Citie among the Philistims, takes the gates of the City, and carries them up into a mountain, and there layes them. Beloved, hee is so *sure a foundation*, that lay the load of all the sinnes you ever committed, lay the load upon him of all the sinners of all people that shall be saved by him, yet he stoops not; these breake him not, hee will carry them away as easily, as *Samson* the gates: adde to that the load of all your duties, and performances, and busineses in the world, lay all upon Christ, he will doe all for you.

Object. But must not we doe them?

Answer. Yea, hee will doe them for you, and in you: first, he will doe them for you, namely, in fulfilling *righteousnesse* in his owne person, which he presents to his Father as that *righteousnesse* whereby Beleevers shall be justified before the Father; as he doth all for them, so he doth all *righteousnesse* in them. Your duties are as the duty you doe to a deceased friend; you think it is the last duty you shall

shall doe for him, to carry him to the grave, though you may have Bearers, you shall goe under the corps, but the Bearers shall have all the weight upon their shoulders, so that you goe easie, in respect of the assistance of the Bearers. Beloved, all the duties wee have to doe may seem weighty; this is an hard saying, and that is a hard saying, who can obey it? But beloved, know, that the Lord Christ he is such a Pillar, such a Bearer to take all the weight of duties upon his back, that he carries the burden, and so carries it, that you shall goe but as the friend of the corps; the burthen shall be from your shoulders. In all duties God calls for, of any person, the strength of Christ is made perfect in the weaknesse of that person that is to doe them: Christ takes not men simply from doing, but hee takes away the heavinesse and the taske. Wee look upon duties as a yoake and burthen; but mark what Christ saith, *Take my yoake, for it is easie: and my burden, for it is light.* How can this be, that it should be a yoake, and yet easie; a burthen, and yet light? It is a yoake and burthen in it selfe, to any person that carries all himselfe, without Christ: but easie and light when Christ beares the weight of it. Again, adde to this, he is *so sure a foundation*, that besides duties, lay all your burthens upon him, his back is broad enough to sustain all your burthens, the burthen of your spirits, the burthen of your outward man, all the burthens of the Church in generall, while shee is under the greatest calamities: Christ I say, is a *sure foundation* to beare all these; to beare the burthen of all the cares of all the people of God: *cast your care upon*

upon him, for he cares for you, saith the Apostle. Finally, he is a *sure foundation*: commit all your comforts unto Christ, hee will uphold all your comforts, he will renew your comforts, he will enlarge your comforts.

Besides, he is an *elect stone* singled out by God himself, for this very office; in respect of his excellency and usefulness to have the *preheminence*, and as he is elected unto it: This imports, it is Gods own act that Christ should have such a *preheminence* to be the foundation. Besides, as it is the act of God, so there is a certainty that God himselfe must be drawne dry, before Christ shall be drawn dry; or lest any jot unable unto that which is imposed upon him. Look therefore beloved, what God himself in heaven is able to doe as he is God; all this is Christ made able to doe by him that sends him about this imployment. So that he must be spent, before Christ shall be dry. If a father hath a child, that he prizeth as his own life, a slave in the gallies; hee will send the ransome of his son to the gallies, hee will spend all that ever he hath, rather then his son shall not be redeemed. There is no wise man sends a servant about any employment in the world, but hee doth furnish him throughly to dispatch that businesse about which he sends him. It is a vaine thing for a master to send a servant for five pounds worth of meat, and not give him so much money: doth God send Christ into the world to redeem sinners, to sustain the burthen of sinners; and not furnish him to doe the worke hee sends him about? He might as well have kept him at home, if he did
not

not furnish him throughly, that he might dispatch it.

Finally, he hath such a preheminance as to be a *living stone*, and such a living stone as makes all stones living that comes neer him: Here is the *preheminance* Christ hath of the *Loadstone*, you observe all Iron or Steell that comes neer it: it draws all to it, and communicates of his own vertue to the Iron it draws: This is most like to Christ, Christ is such a *Loadstone*, that he drawes many after him; and as he draws them after him, so he communicates his own vertue to them: so that now as he is a living stone, he communicates life to them though they were dead in sinne. And not onely so, but he communicates power to them to make other things lively. You have an observation when once a knife is touched with a *Loadstone*, it will draw another: it is most certaine, Christ hath this vertue to draw souls to himselfe, and when he drawes them, they partaking of life from him, he gives unto them to be instruments of life unto others: *When thou art converted, saith Christ to Peter, strengthen thy brethren.* Now beloved, seeing Christ hath all this preheminance given unto him by the Father, to be such a foundation to bear up all things; let us give him this preheminance to lay all upon him, and not upon anything else whatsoever: And so far as we do lay all upon this *Stone*, *this tried Stone*, *this pretious corner Stone*, *this sure foundation*, *this elect corner Stone*, *this living Stone*; so farre as we will venture all upon him, we so farre give him the preheminance: but if we will be setting buttresses to the house, that is
built

built upon a rock, what is this but a disparagement to the foundation? If the foundation be firm and good, wherefore then served buttresses: it is apparent the house will sink when it cannot stand alone without them. So far as you set any props unto Christ the foundation, that is to beare up all himself: so farre you disparage Christ, so farre you bring him downe, and give him not the preheminence. I see the time steales away. There are many particulars wherein I should shew you how you may give the preheminence unto Christ. But I must hasten.

Consider briefly, why should Christ have the preheminence? Why should not other things sit cheek by jowle with him? I answere, because it is the good will and pleasure of the Father he should have the preheminence. What is the reason *Joseph* must be the chiefe man in Egypt? *Pharaoh* will have it so. What is the reason that *Mordecai* must be led through the Citie with pompe and triumph, and *Haman* lead the horse, when *Mordecai* was counted but a slave to *Haman*? Why, King *Ahasuerus* will have it so. And if God will have it so, it must bee so: if there were no other reason but God the Fathers will, wee that are Subjects should yeeld to the Father his own will, and give that honor to him whom he will honour: What shall be done to the man whom the King will honour? Thus shalt thou doe to him, let the royall apparell be brought which the King useth to weare, and the horse that the King rideth upon, and the crown royall which is set upon his head; and let this apparell and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the Kings most noble Princes, that they may aray the
man

man withall whom the King delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the Citie, and proclaime before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the King will honour. Ester 6.8, 9. as much as to say, those the King honours, the people must honour with him: so, if God the Father will honour the Son with a preheminence upon earth, his will must be a law to us, we must honour him with that preheminence, because he will have it so.

Secondly, *Christ* must have the preheminence above all other things in the world, as hee is born unto it; he is heir of all things. You know, beloved, it is the right of the heir to have the inheritance, or a double portion above his brethren; *Christ* therefore being the heire of the world, the first begotten of the Father; nay, the only Son, it stands with nature he should have the preheminence above a younger brother.

Thirdly, *Christ* hath bought the preheminence, hee hath paid for it to the uttermost value of it. He that buyeth a Lordship, it is fit he should be Lord of the Manor; it is not fit any inferior tenant should be above him, as long as he hath purchased and given a price for it: *Christ* hath purchased this preheminence, and he hath paid the Father the uttermost farthing: Hee beheld the wavel of his soule, and was satisfied with it: and therefore hee ought to have it.

Fourthly, *Christ* ought to have the preheminence of all things, in that he alone is able to manage this preheminence. You know there are many favorites in States sometimes, that have the widding of all businessses of State in respect of the favour of the

the Prince ; but the State comes to ruine, and they also, if they be not able to manage the State. If any creature in the world should have the preheminence given to him to manage all affaires in the world, but Christ himselfe, certainly beloved, it would prove to the world as the Poet feigned it did, by the son of *Phebus*, that went to drive the Chariot of the Sun; *Phebus* could manage the same in order, but *Phaeton*, a novice, a stripling, an ignorant fellow comes in, he steps up to rule the Sun, and the whole world is set on fire: I say, it would be so at least with the world, if any creature should have the preheminence to manage the affaires of it. Look to the wisest man in the world, and most able to manage the affaires of the world, yet he hath so many Irons in the fire, some of them burn for want of looking to: Therefore Christ should have the preheminence, because he can goe through-stitch with what ever businesse he undertakes.

Fifthly, Christ should have the preheminence in all things, because he hath best deserved it at our hands. We usually honour those people to whom we are most bound; according to the kindnes received, so is our exalting of the person. Now, beloved, what creature in the world comes neer to Christ in loving kindnes and desert at our hands? Where had we been, had not Christ stepped in between us and the Father, to make peace with the Father for us? Oh what a fearefull account should we have come unto at the great tribunall of the Lord, had not Christ before-hand cancelled all that God could charge us withall, and blotted out our transgressions, and presented us without spot or wrinkle;

wrinkle, or any such thing in the sight of God? Coloss. 1. 22. *In him you live, move, and have your being. By him you have access to the throne of grace, through a new and living way. All you have, and all that you are, all that you hope for hereafter, comes onely from this fountaine, this Christ who hath purchased all of the Father for you. If any creature in the world can doe these things for you, let the creature be exalted above him; but if he leave all the creatures of the world behind, and out-strip them; good reason there is, according to his desert, he should have the preheminence. The Apostle considering the infinite desert of Christ to bee exalted by men, breaks out into this vehement expression, If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed with a great curse, 1 Cor. 16 22. so deserves this Christ at the hands of man.*

Now for application of it, is it Christs due to have the preheminence? Then bring down every high thing that exalts it self above Christ, reare and set up the throwne downe, and dejected Christ in you: you that have exalted the world, and made it your God, bring down this Idoll, grind it to the dust, set up the Lord Christ, if you will have any thing in the world, let Christ heare of it. When men would have any thing of a King, they never goe to the Skullion in the kitchen; but to the Favourite by whom the King hath declared hee will deliver things. When the people came to Pharaoh, hee sends them to Joseph, as Joseph said, hee would doe: so I say to you, would you have any thing of God? goe to Christ, goe by Christ to him. If you come in any other name in the world, if God an-
swers

swers you in that you would have, hee answers you with a curse, *This is my beloved Sonne, heare him* : As he will direct you, so you shall speed ; if Christ say, *Your sinnes are forgiven*, they shall be forgiven ; If Christ will make a Deed of gift to you, of libertie from bondage, of grace, or of glory : If *Christ* hath once past the Deed, the Father will under-write to it, and subscribe it ; If *the Sonne* make you free, then are you free indeed : For of *his fulnesse* doe wee receive grace for grace. In *John 17.2.* it is said, *The Father hath given to him power over all flesh, that he should give eternall life.* As you will have these things, goe to Christ ; if you goe any where else in the world but to *Christ*, you shall goe without, they are to be had no where else. God hath given him the preheminence, hee must rule all ; he must determine, and the Father will yeeld, *The Father hath given all judgement to the Son, and hee himself will judge no man : The government is laid upon his shoulders* : Therefore beloved, you must goe where God sends you, if you will speed for any thing of him.

Learn of Christ more, let Christ be the *Alpha* and *Omega* in all things, begin in Christ, end in Christ, doe all in Christ, get all by Christ.

Object. But must we serve in duty ?

Ans. Yee must serve in duty and obedience, but look not that that duty should bring any thing ; it is Christ brings every thing you get, you get no thing by duties : assure your selves, while you looke to get by that you doe, you will but get a knock because of so much sinfulness in the duty ; but if you will have any good, you must get it by Christ ; your duties you perform, are that wherein you are

to walke in the World, and before the World, that you may be profitable to men; but as for getting any thing, assure your selves, while you labour to get by duties, you provoke God, as much as lies in you to punish you for such presumption, if not for the filthinesse of the things you perform.

And as you must bring every thing down that exalts it self above Christ; so you must set Christ above every thing, know, this will be *the great condemnation, that light, that is Christ, is come into the World, and men love darknesse rather then light: they love to run to other things, and to forsake the light, this will be the condemnation.* So farre as Christ is slighted and other things promoted above him, so farre you take away the great end for which Christ was sent into the World, which was that he might have the prebeminence in all things.



SERMON VI.

The New Covenant of Free-grace.

Esay 42: 6, 7. *And I will give thee for a Covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darknesse out of the prison house.*

He Lord is pleased by this sweet Euangelist of the Jewes; this Euangelicall Prophet Esay, to poure forth his own gracious thoughts and purposes concerning his dear Son Christ; In this Chapter especially he doth reveale and declare

clare himself from the beginning of it.

It is worth the while to mark the coherence, to see how these words come in.

First, hee declares who it is that hee doth send into the world for such a businesse, by two titles, in the first verse: First, he calls him a *servant*, that is, in respect of employment and businesse he hath to doe, wherein he is to serve the Lord: And in reference to this businesse, he tells us what he doth, that this his servant may dispatch it effectually, *Behold my servant*, saith hee, *whom I uphold*. Secondly, he calls him his *Elect*, and that in reference to the designation or separation of him, the singling him out unto this businesse. And he doth further amplify the description of him by the tenderesse of this *Elect* unto him, *my elect*, saith hee, *in whom my soule delighteth*: Here is the discription of the person Christ is this person, as you shall hear by and by whom he thus describes.

In the next place, the Lord propounds the great end for which he doth elect this his servant, and uphold him, and furnish him with his Spirit: For he saith also, *I have put my Spirit upon him*. And the end of it is, *that he may bring judgement to the Gentiles*. Here you see who he is, how he is furnished, and to what end he is furnished: A servant upheld, his Spirit put upon him, to the end that he might bring judgement to the Gentiles.

The Lord proceeds further, and shewes how this servant of his shall deport and demean himselfe; after what manner he shall carry this businesse in the world, to bring judgement to the Gentiles he describes this in two circumstances, 1. First,

Christ shall dispatch this businesse of the Father, not in a ruffling or stirring way : Hee shall not make a great noyse, as men use to doe, sounding trumpets before them when they doe any good : but as you have it in the second verse, *Hee shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause his voice to bee heard in the streets*: Hee shall goe privately about his businesse. And secondly, hee doth illustrate the manner of managing and ordering this businesse, by the tenderesse of the Spirit of this Christ, towards those people with whom he shall deale : Hee doth, I say, illustrate this tenderesse of his Spirit admirably in the third verse. *A bruised reed shall hee not breake, and the smoking flax shall hee not quench*: hee shall not deale roughly or harshly, but gently and mildly : And yet as little noise as hee shall make, though hee shall not seem to promise any great thing by his privacie of deportment and carriage, yet for all that in the fourth verse, the Lord by his Prophet tells us, that hee shall be never the further off from performing the businesse he takes in hand : *Hee shall not fail nor be discouraged, till hee hath judgement in the earth*.

And then in the fifth verse the Lord is pleased to confirme this by undeniable arguments, that there shall not be a failing in Christ to compasse his great businesse : The arguments, I say, are strong : *Thus saith the Lord, hee that created the heavens, and stretched them out ; hee that spread forth the earth, and that that commeth out of it ; hee that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walke thereon*.

Hee is not a mean person that undertakes this thing, but the mighty Lord, hee that hath done

all great things in the world, that have been done heretofore : it is hee that undertakes it, and therefore there is no feare that it should faile.

Having thus discoursed in generall concerning the businesse of Christ in the world, and the manner of managing it; he comes againe with the same thing, and descends unto particular instances and illustrations of what hee delivered before but generally : Therefore, 1. First, in the beginning of the sixth verse, the Lord is pleased to shew forth the authority and commission by which Christ is authorized unto this great businesse; *I the Lord* (saith the Text) *have called thee in righteousnesse*: This call is the commission of Christ. *No man takes this honour unto him, but he that is called of God*, (saith the Apostle) *as Aaron was*. That gives authoritie to a businesse, to be called of God. Secondly, hee reiterateth the helpfulnesse of God, as well as his call unto it, in the following words, *I will hold thy hand and keep thee*. And so thirdly, hee falls in with an explication, or interpretation : First, how Christ shall compasse this great businesse which hee calls him out unto : Hee shall doe it thus, by the fathers giving of him to bee a Covenant to the people. Secondly, what Christ is to doe, to the end for which hee is called out to bee a Covenant, before it was said, *to bring judgement to the Gentiles*, that was his busines in the end of the fifth verse, now hee doth expound what this judgement is, it is to open the blind eyes, to bring the prisoners out of prison, &c.

There are two maine things in the Text : first is the way by which Christ doth compasse

the great businesse of the Father upon earth, and that is, by being given to be a covenant to the people. Secondly, the businesse it selfe whereunto hee is called out, that is, to open the blind eyes, to bring the prisoners out of prison. So you see how sweetly these truths hang together.

For the words themselves, there are these particulars considerable in them: First, who it is that speakes this gracious language in the Text, you shall finde in the beginning of the verse, it is the Lord, Thus saith the Lord, I will call thee, and give thee for a covenant.

Secondly, we may consider the persons to whom this gracious language is directed and spoken, and that is unto Christ, expressed onely in this place by the name of Thee, and give Thee for a covenant. Beloved, marke here, I pray you; it is not, I will give my self: it should bee so if the Father had spoken to or of himself only: but it is plain, here are two severall persons mentioned, I, and Thee; if there be two severall persons, then it cannot be God speaking to himself, it must be the Father speaking to the Son, to Christ.

Object. Yea, but you you will say, It is some body else that speaks, and is spoken unto.

Ans. Nay, but marke say 49. where the same expressions are used, that are in the text. And then you shall plainly see it is the speech of the Father unto Christ, by many circumstances that will illustrate it. In the fifth verse hee begins thus: And now, saith the Lord that formed mee from the wombe, hee his servant, to bring Jacob againe to him: It is none but Christ that brings Jacob backe: And

you that were sometimes as farre off, hath bee made nigh by the blood of Christ. And in vers. 6. he saith, *It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel.* Who is it, that raiseth the tribes of Jacob, and restores the preserved of Israel? None but Christ, who is the Saviour of all that are saved. Here hee begins to fall upon some of the words in the text it self. I will also give thee for a light unto the Gentiles, that thou maist be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Here it is plain now that it is only Christ; for none is the Salvation of men unto the end of the earth, but Christ alone. Again look into vers. 8. and you may see more of the words of the text: *Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee, and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a Covenant to the people.* Here you see likewise, that he who is the Saviour of Israel, he it is who is given for a Covenant to the people. And in vers. 9. *That thou maist say to the Prisoners, gett forth: and to them that are in darknesse, shew your selves:* so here is the same thing delivered more plainly, and Christ more fully exprest. This I have opened more at large, because all I shall speak will depend upon the opening of this truth.

Thirdly, In the next place, in the words of my text, we are to note, what he doth speak unto Christ here, even gracious language in respect of us, *He will give him for a Covenant.*

Fourthly, note here unto whom the Father gives Christ for a Covenant: the text saith, *unto the people, and unto the Gentiles,* that is, to Jewes and to Gentiles, to all sorts of people.

Fifthly, note the end and purpose for which the Father gives him to be a Covenant unto the people, *to open the blind eyes, to bring the prisoners out of prison.*

So you have the parts and members of the Text, which afford many excellent truths, and we might well single them severally out : but for brevity sake, I will reduce the whole substance of this Text into one proposition. Doct. *The Father is pleased to give Christ for a Covenant to the people and Gentiles, to open their blind eyes, and to bring them as prisoners out of prison.* This Doctrine you see, is directly the words of the Text, adding only that explication, *that it is the Father that doth give Christ.* There is abundance of marrow and fatnesse in this present truth I have delivered unto you, more then people usually can find out in it. We will endeavour therefore to breake the bone, that all the marrow may be seen, and none of it may be lost. For this purpose, we must desire you to observe these following particulars.

1 First, what it is for Christ to be a Covenant, or, the Covenant.

2. Secondly, what it is for Christ to be given to be a Covenant.

3. Thirdly, what it is for Christ to be a Covenant to open the blind eyes.

4. Fourthly, if time will permit, we will then consider to *whom* this Christ is given to be a Covenant, *who* they are that may partake of Christ given to be a Covenant unto them.

First, I will begin with the first of these, what it is for Christ to be a Covenant, and herein will

consider two things. First, What this Covenant is that Christ is unto us. Secondly, How Christ himself is said to be this Covenant.

First, for the first of these what this Covenant is, which Christ is unto persons. First, a word or two in generall concerning the nature of a Covenant. The common and usuall manner of Covenants, as you all know, is thus much; namely a mutuall agreement between parties upon certaine Articles or propositions propounded on both sides, so that each party is bound and tied to fulfill his own conditions, which if either of them faile in, the other is thereby freed from his part, and the Covenant becomes nullified, void, and frustrated. You all know this is the true nature of a common Covenant.

There are two sorts of Covenants generally, wherwith God enters with men. There are divers particular Covenants, but I will omit to speak of them; such as the Covenant with *David* to establish his throne to himselfe, and to his posterity; this the Prophet *Jeremy* speaks of at large, in chap. 33. which I shall only touch upon and mention, the rather, because some are conceited there was no other Covenant made with *David*, but the Covenant of grace, *Jer. 33. 20.* Thus saith the Lord, If you can break my Covenant of the day, and my Covenant of the night, that there should not be day nor night in their seasons: then also may my Covenant be broken with *David* my servant, that he should not have a Sonne to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites, the Priests, my Ministers. This Covenant is for the establishment of his throne, and this is a different Covenant from the
Covenant

Covenant of grace, that is common to all sorts of Believers, one with another: But I omit that.

There are two main generall Covenants God enters into with men; the one is called the first Covenant, *the old Covenant*, the Covenant of works: it stood upon these terms: *doe this and live*. The other is called a *new Covenant* by the Prophet *Jeremy*, and by the Apostle *Heb 8*. It is called a better Covenant, a Covenant of grace. As for the first, the old Covenant, the Covenant of works, which stood upon these terms, *doe this and live*: it is very probable, if not certain, that Christ was this first Covenant unto men, even the Covenant of works. For, however it be not a Covenant of grace, as the second and new Covenant is: yet it may in some sense be called a Covenant of grace, in reference unto other Creatures: For all creatures are under this tie, *to doe this*, that is, what their part is which God hath imposed upon them: Yet no Creature hath this priviledge of grace, that in doing this he should live. The sun doth his part, he runs his race: yet the sun lives not in, or upon the performance hereof: Brute creatures doe their part, that is, the trade they are set about: yet they die and perish, and are no more, when they have done: *What then is man, that thou art mindfull of him, or the son of man, that thou so visitest him? Psal 8, 4.* that hee should have life, and no other creature in the World, seeing there can be no difference in the creatures of themselves, the difference must be in the grace of GOD, which makes this difference, that some creatures should live by doing, and others not. *Proverbs 8. 31.* You shall see the ground
of

of this covenant. When the Lord made all things in the world, *Wisdom*, which is Christ, there tells us, That she was the delight of the Father, and her whole delight was with the *sonnes* of men: I say, the foundation upon which the difference was built, between man and other creatures, that he hath this covenant by grace, and others not, is this: All the delight of Christ was with the sons of men. He himselfe singled out the sons of men to be his delight, as he was the delight of the Father; and for his sake the Father will doe more for them then for other creatures.

But now the Covenant which the Lord mentions in this place by the Prophet, is not the *first*, but the *second* covenant: *I will give thee for a Covenant to the people*: He means here not the covenant of works, but the covenant of grace. Which covenant is mentioned *Jer. 31. 33.* and renewed againe by the Prophet *Ezekiel, 36. 26.* and so also in *Hebr. 8* where you shall find both the covenant it selfe, and how, and in what sense Christ is said to be that very covenant unto men: In *v. 6.* you shall find this appropriated unto Christ to be his great priviledge, to have the sole hand and managing of this new covenant: "But now saith the Apostle, he hath obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant. And what is this better covenant? Mark what follows, *v. 8.* "Behold the dayes come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant I made with their Fathers: for in *v. 10.* This is the covenant I will make with the house of Is-

“rael, after those dayes, saith the Lord, I will put
 “my laws into their minde, and write them in their
 “hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they
 “shall be to me a people: And they shall not eve-
 “ry man teach his neighbour, and every man his
 “brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know
 “me from the least to the greatest: for I will be
 “mercifull to their unrighteousnesse, and their sins
 “and iniquities will I remember no more. Here is
 “the substance of the covenant, I will be their
 “God, and they shall be my people.

Now all that I will briefly note out of all this,
 shall be only one Proposition, wherein you shall
 see both a vast and comfortable difference be-
 tween this new covenant and all other covenants
 that God made with men: It differs, I say, excee-
 dingly, and the comfort lies in the difference,
 which is this,

All other covenants of God besides this, runne
 upon a stipulation, and the promise runnes altoge-
 ther upon condition on both sides; The condition
 on Gods part was, *They should live*. The condition
 on mans part was, that he might live, *he must*
doe this. And mark, the conditions in that covenant
 were such, that in case man did fail to perform
 his condition, the covenant was broke, and
 God was free from giving life, which accordingly
 came to passe; for man failing in doing, the
 covenant was actually broken, disannulled and
 frustrated, and man lay under the curse of the
 breach of the covenant in not doing. But in this
 covenant of Grace, to wit, the new covenant, it is farre
 otherwise, There is not any condition in this cove-
 nant

nant. Mark what I say beloved, and I beseech you hear me with an impartiall and unprejudicate opinion. I know I shall goe against the strain of some; but I hope what I shall deliver, shall bee firmly proved from Scripture: I say, the *New Covenant* is without any conditions whatsoever on mans part. Man istied to no condition that hee must performe, that if he doe not perform, the covenant is made void by him.

The first Argument is this, The covenant is called *everlasting Covenant*: and here in *Heb. 8.* in the latter end, God saith, *I will be mercifull to your iniquities, and your finnes will I remember no more.* Now suppose there were conditions for man to performe, and suppose man did faile in those conditions, what were become of the covenant? Man did fail in the condition, whilst there were conditions before in the first covenant, and thereby the covenant was frustrate. Man is not now so confirmed, but if there were conditions for him to performe, which if he did not perform, the covenant should be broken, I say, he is not so confirmed, but hee might fail in those conditions: nay, if those be the conditions that some men conceive, then hee doth daily faile: And if the Covenant stand upon such conditions, the covenant is frustrated so soone as the conditions are broken. So I say, if the covenant stands upon any conditions to be performed on mans part, it cannot be an *everlasting* covenant, except man were so confirmed in righteousness, that he should never fail in that which is his part.

Obj. But you will say, there are many conditions mentioned in this covenant: It was said, that there

there must bee a law put in the mind, and writ in the heart, with many other such things.

Ans. I answer, beloved, It is true, God saith, I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, &c. But doe you find in this, or in any other, mention of a covenant that this is the condition to be performed on mans part; I say, that this is the condition of the covenant, and such a condition, that if man perform it not, the covenant is frustrated: There is no such thing in the text.

Obj. But you will say, conditions, or no conditions, a man must have his heart in this manner.

Ans. I answer, it is true by way of consequence, that after we are in covenant with God, hee will bestow these things upon us as fruits and effects of that Covenant. But it is not true by way of Antecedence, that God doth require these things at our hands before we shall be partakers of the covenant.

The second argument, observe, I pray, and you shall plainly perceive, that man hath no tie upon him to perform any thing whatsoever in the covenant, as a condition that must be observed on his part. Let the Covenant it selfe be Judge in this case: It doth plainly shew where all the tie lies, and as plainly shew that the whole performance of the covenant lies onely upon God himself, and that there is not one bond or obligation upon man to the fulfilling of the covenant, or partaking in the benefits of the Covenant. Mark it in *Jeremy*, in *Ezekiel*, or in this eighth to the *Hebrewes*, read those passages over, wherein the tenure of the Covenant is containd, and you shall easily see where

where the tie is, as Heb. 8.10. *This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those dayes, I will put my Law into their mindes, and write it in their hearts: Hee will put it in and write it; and hee will be to them a God, and they shall be to him a people: The word [shall]* here is a word of over-ruling, it is a word of power, as if he had said, I will take an order that it shall be so: It followes, *and they shall not every man teach his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; For they shall all know me: How? by their owne study or industry? No, see John 6. 45. and you shall see that, that condition of knowing the Lord is to be performed by the Lord, for so it is there said, They shall be all taught of God.* Observe also the larger expression of the Covenant in Eze. 36. 25. And there also you shall plainly perceive, that still all the tie lies upon God himself, and nothing at all upon man: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean
 "from all your filthinesse, and from all your Idols
 "will I cleanse you: A new heart will I also give
 "you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And
 "I will take the stony heart out of your flesh, and I
 "will give you a heart of flesh: And I will put
 "my Spirit into you, and cause you to walke in my
 "Statutes, and yee shall keep my judgements and
 "doe them, and shall dwell in the Land: and in
 "ver. 29. I will save you from all your uncleanses,
 "and I will multiply the fruits of the earth, I will
 "doe it. Where is there in all this, one word that God sayes to man, Thou must doe this? If God had put man upon these things, then they were conditions indeed: But when God takes all upon himself,

himself, where are the conditions then on mans part? Give me leave, I will aske you but this question, Suppose there should be a fault, I make but a supposition; suppose there should be a fault of performing in this Covenant, whose were the fault? Must not the fault or failing to perform the Covenant be his, who is tied and bound to every thing in the Covenant, and saith he will doe it? If there be a condition, and there should be a failing in the condition, hee that undertakes all things in the Covenant must needs be in fault: But the truth is, these particulars mentioned are not the conditions of the Covenant, but they are consequents of the Covenant; The main substance of the Covenant is included in these words, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* But, sprinkling with clean water, taking away a stony heart, and giving a heart of flesh: All these are nothing but the fruits of the Covenant, which is, that God is the God of such a people, and the people are a people of such a God. For by vertue of this union, or uniting himself to his people, God doth cleanse and purge, he doth sanctifie and refine them. As he becomes the God of his people, so he purgeth and cleanseth them. Hee doth not first come to men and say, make your selves clean, get you the Law of God in your mindes; get you the fear of God into your hearts; get you power to walke in my Statutes; and when you doe this, then I will be your God. If it did run so, then here were conditions indeed: But beloved, it runs not thus; all the tie lies upon Gods part, to doe every thing that is mentioned in the covenant.

Obj: 5

Object. But you will object, and say: If all lie upon Gods part, and man must doe nothing; then all his life time he may doe what he list.

Answer. I answer, You must make a difference between doing any thing in reference to the covenant, as the condition thereof: and in doing something in reference to service and duty to the God who freely enters into covenant with you. I say only that in way of condition of the covenant you must do nothing.

The third argument. Nay, the covenant in the actuall substance of it, is made good to a person before he can doe any thing. The main thing in the covenant is Gods being the God of a people, and the modell and draught of that, is Gods love: the covenant is nothing but Gods love to man, Gods love to give himselfe to man, Gods love to take man to himselfe: Now this love of Gods cast upon man before he can doe any thing. *Before the children had done good or evill, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated.* Shall I need to tell you that the covenant is then fulfilled in the substance of it, when men are actuall justified? When men are justified, God hath made good his covenant unto them; he is their God, and they are his people: now where are the conditions of this covenant? Take but notice what the Apostle saith, and then tell me what conditions you find in *Rom. 4.* whereas in vers. 4. he had said, *Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But,* saith he in vers. 5. *to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly.* There are two phrases here, to shew, there can

no conditions to make up the Covenant on mans part, First, *to him that worketh not.* If there must be no working to partake of justification, then there is no conditions unto it. And again, if we must believe on him that justifies the ungodly; then justification is past over to a person whilst he is ungodly; Now where is the condition of the Covenant, while there remains nothing but ungodlineffe in men? But if these things must be fulfilled as conditions, namely, to change our hearts, and such like; then we are not justified as ungodly, but now as righteous. And so it doth directly contradict that of the Apostle. We must therefore conclude, that this covenant which is then made good when a person is justified, is confer'd & pour'd out to a person before there can be any such thing as a condition in him.

Object. Yea, but you will say to me, Peradventure though works be not the condition of the covenant: yet we hope you will yeild Faith is the condition of the Covenant.

Ans. Beloved, I beseech you observe me warily in this, for I am now upon a nice point; and I shall desire to goe as evenly as the Scripture will guide me in it. I must needs tell you directly, and according to the truth, that *Faith is not the condition of the covenant.* *Object.* He that believes shall be saved, he that believes not shall be damned. Is not Faith here the condition of the covenant?

Ans. I answer, there is no person under heaven shall be saved till he have believed. This I grant, yet this will not make faith to be the condition of the covenant. For first, consider faith as an act, our act, and as we do it: so I say it is a work, our act

of beleeving is a work. If therefore wee perform the condition that is a work for the enjoyment of the covenant, then the covenant doth depend upon a work: But it doth not depend upon a worke, for the text saith, *To him that worketh nor, but beleeveeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, &c.*

Ob. You will say, in that text beleeving is required to the justifying of the ungodly.

An. I answer, an ungodly person, after hee is justified doth beleeve: but you must understand it. It is not the faith of the person that doth simply and properly justifie, but it is that Christ in whom he doth beleeve; *beleeveeth on him that justifieth the ungodly*: It is he that justifieth, that is Christ. It is not beleeving that justifies. Mark well that phrase *Him that justifieth*. Justification is an act of Christ, is not an act of faith.

Ob. But you wil say, it is an act of *Christ* by faith.

Ans. I answer, then Christ justifies not alone. Is faith Christ himself? If not, then Christ must have a partner to justifie, or else faith doth not justifie; but Christ alone doth it. Nay, I say more. Christ doth justifie a person before hee doth beleeve: For, he that beleeves is justified, before he beleeves; for I aske you, Whether in Justification a man must beleeve a truth or a falshod? You will say, he must beleeve a truth: Then say I it is a truth that he is justified before he beleeves it; he cannot beleeve that which is not, and if he be not justified that he may beleeve it, he then beleeves that which is false. But he is first justified before hee beleeves then he beleeves that he is justified.

Object. But what then serves faith for?

Anf. I answer, it serves for the manifestation of that justification which Christ puts upon a person by himselfe alone, that you by beleiving on him, may have the declaration, and manifestation of your justification. Mark what the Apostle saith, whereby you shall find the true use of faith, that it is not the condition, without which wee receive no benefit from Christ, but rather it is the manifestation of that which is already done and received. Heb. 11.1. The Apostle saith, *Faith is the ground of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* I pray you observe the Apostles expression, there is abundance of light in it. Faith it is the evidence of things, it is not the being of things; and it is the evidence of things not seen. A man is justified, and that by Christ alone, but it is not knowne to him, it is an unseen thing. Well, how shall he see this, and know that it is so? The text saith, *faith is evidence, faith gives evidence to this thing, faith makes it knowne, by faith we come to apprehend by faith we come to rejoyce in it, as wee apprehend it to be our owne.* It is true indeed, Christ hath honoured faith admirably: but let us take heed we doe not over-honour it, to give the peculiar reserved Prerogative of Christ himselfe unto faith were a concurrent thing with Christ, Christ did not justify a person alone, what should follow? Consider, when a person is justified, is justified from all unrighteousnesse: and if his faith justify him from all unrighteousnes, this thing will unavoidably follow, That that thing which is full of unrighteousnes will justify a man from unrighteousnes, such as to say, a man is justified from sin by sin.

Obj. But you will say, Faith is not sinne.

Ans. No, faith it self is not sinne; but that faith acted by Beleevers, is full of sinne, and the fulnesse of sinne in it, makes faith in some sense a sinfull faith: and if it be sinfull, how can that which is sinfull justifie persons from sinfulness? What need Christ be without all sin to justifie a person, if any thing else could doe it that hath sinfulness in it? You must either say there is no sinne in your faith, or else you must say, you are justified by that which hath sinne in it. Yet, I say still, as faith is an evidence, a manifestation, so it may be said to be our justification, that wee are, in regard of our own hearts, and our own spirits, justified by faith. But to Godward, as wee stand actually before him, a discharged people from sinne, and so consequently partakers of the covenant, as wee stand thus, I say, it is not faith that justifies, neither wholly, nor in part: but Christ alone freely for his own sake, considering a person as ungodly, so hee justifies him.

Beloved, let me tell you; though faith it self cannot thus be called our righteousness; yet in respect of the glory that God ascribes to it, that seals to mens souls the fulnesse of righteousness, how can you consider a person, a beleeving person, and withall an ungodly person? When persons are beleevers, they cease to be ungodly: And if men be not justified till they doe beleeve, Christ doth not justifie the ungodly, but the godly, and that truth that I have delivered out of Rom. 4. doth not hold currant, *that wee must beleeve on him that justifies the ungodly*: but rather wee must beleeve

him that justifies the righteous. But as I said, wee doe not beleeeve that wee may be justified; but wee doe beleeeve, and truly beleeeve when wee are, and because we are justified So that still it stands firm, we are not justified, wee are not in covenant, wee partake not in the covenant by any condition we perform, till which performance the covenant cannot be made good unto us. But we are in covenant, and Christ makes us to be in covenant for his own sake, without any condition in the creature, *shewing mercy to whom hee will shew mercy*, without any thing, I say, the creature is to doe to this end, to partake of the covenant.

3. The second Querie. In the next place consider, how *Christ* himself can be said to be the Covenant? For the text tells us, that hee doth not onely give Christ that there may be a covenant with men; but saith he, *I will give thee for a Covenant*: Hee himselfe is made the covenant. I answer. Christ is the covenant three wayes. 1. He is the covenant *fundamentally*. 2. *materially*. 3. *equivalently*.

First, Christ is the covenant *fundamentally*, that is, he is the originall of the covenant, the beginning of the covenant. The covenant of Grace takes its being from Christ: *Adam* was all mankind, as all mankind was in *Adam*, in the loynes of *Adam*: so Christ is the covenant, and all the covenant is, as it were, in the loins of Christ, and springs out of him, he is the *covenant maker*, he is the *covenant undertaker*, hee is the *covenant manager*: Hee orders the covenant, hee is the *covenant dispatcher*: Hee doth every thing in the covenant, hee makes the Articles, hee drawes God the Father to an

agreement unto the Articles ; *thy people shall bee a willing people in the day of thy power* , Psal. 110. 3. And *God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself* , 2 Cor. 5. 19. Christ brings God downe to the termes of the covenant, to yeeld to them. Christ brings man also to be willing to it. And therefore in this very 8 chapter to the *Hebrewes*, v. 6. Christ is called the *Mediator* of the covenant. A *Mediator*, what is that ? A mediator of a covenant is a person that hath the managing of it on both sides. A Covenant is no covenant till it be concluded and done : there may be articles , but it is not actually a covenant, till both sides are agrend : So there cannot bee a *Mediator* of a covenant, till there be one that is able to bring both sides together, and make up a conclusion. And thus Christ is the Covenant , or the mediator of the covenant, as he manageth all things in it. *Job* hath an excellent expression to shew forth the soleneffe of Christ to deale in the covenant between God and men : hee makes a bitter complaint, and pitifull lamentation , hee knowes not how to deal with God, and gives this as a reason of it, *Iob* 9 32, 33, *For he is not a man as I am, that I should answer him and wee should come together in judgement, neither is there any dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.* A Dayes-man, it is Christ that is this Dayes-man, it is all one with an Vmpire or a Mediator, hee must come between, and lay his hand upon us both. What is that ? Upon God and us ; the meaning is , Hee that is the Dayes-man, the mediator, he must be such a person that hath power on both parties that enter into covenant together : Hee must lay his hand upon
 God

God, that is, he must have power with God, and bring God to such tearmes as he doth propound: and lay his hand upon man, to bring man on: And when he layes his hand upon both, then he is a Mediator of the Covenant. And in this sense Christ is a Covenant, as he doth the managing and dispatching of all the businesse of the Covenant from the first to the last.

Secondly, as Christ is fundamentally, so he is materially the Covenant. Christ himselfe is the Covenant as he is Christ. This seemes stranger, but beloved, there is an admirable wisdom of God to be adored in this thing; The Covenant substantially standing in this, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Now Christ he is both these in himselfe; he is God unto his people, and he is the people unto God, and before him. Both these meet in that one Christ, and are both of them admirably illustrated to us in the first of *Matth. v. 22*, where, upon the birth of Christ, the Angel saith, *They shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us:* Christ is God with us, not only as Christs Godhead did take the humane nature simply; but Christ is God with us, that is, Christ is so ordered by the Father, for men, that the Father may see the Deity and humanity made up in one, to wit, Christs person: And so consequently all the people that are the people of God, are considered in Christ as part of him. For Christ is considered two wayes, either as he consists of the Godhead and one individuall humane nature; or as he consists of the Godhead, and a compact of many persons considered as

members of Christs mysticall body : So Christ is the head, and all those that are in Covenant with him are members ; and this Head and Members together make up one compleat and intire body, Consider Christ thus, and then you shall see in him *God, the God of his people, and men the people of God :* and both these meet together only in Christ.

Christ in a very few words, doth very excellently set forth this his owne being *materially* the Covenant, *John 17.22, 23. And the glory thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, as we are one :* Here first he speaks of unity among themselves, as members have unity in one body : Then he goes further in the next verse, *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in me ; as much as* to say thus ; as I have assumed humanity, and besides the humanity have assumed the members of my mysticall body ; so I am in them, and they in me ; and by this my being one with them, and they one with me, they become one with us both : *So God to be the God of his people, and the people to be the people of God,* meet both in this one Christ, *God and man ;* Christ as Head united to his members, and they as members in Covenant with him.

Thirdly, Christ himselfe is said to be the Covenant *equivaleently*, I mean thus, Though the main substance of the Covenant be fulfilled to believers as soon as they are justified, that is, while they are ungodly ; yet there are particular branches ; or rather fruits of the Covenant to be fulfilled to Believers in their season : to have God more abundantly pouring out himselfe in all manner of graciousnesse, this is to be fulfilled in season. Now

Christ

Christ is said to be the Covenant, as a present pawn or earnest delivered into the hands of a person, at the very instant of his justification, which pawn is of equall value and worth with the whole Covenant, when it is fulfilled to the uttermost: So Christ being given over to men as a pawn and earnest, they have at the first instant, the whole Covenant *equivalently*. If a man deliver money to another, and he receives a pawn worth the money; then he hath the money in his hand, though not in *specie*, yet in *value*; he hath as much as the money is worth; and so by consequence it is as much as if he had the money it selfe: Christ delivered over in justification is of equall value with all that is to be fulfilled, when the Covenant is fulfilled to the uttermost. He being of equall value, it followes that Christ is the covenant by estimation, though not in respect of the accomplishment, and fulfilling of the severall fruits.

Thus I have done with the first branch: This I desired to cleare more fully, because I find the World is marvellously puzzled with the mixture of other things besides Christ in the Covenant: we will goe a little further this morning, because I would dispatch that I intend, and would not willingly leave any thing, not knowing when, or whether ever I shall see your faces againe. I will therefore enter upon the next thing of great concernment: I hope there hath been no mistake of what I have spoken, and then I know the truth of it will justifie it selfe against all contradiction.

2. The second thing is, What it is for Christ to be given for a Covenant? I answer, *All that*
benefit

benefit that *Christ* is, or all that *Christ* can be to a person, is a meer deed of gift; and it comes only as a very true and reall gift unto men, upon no other terms, upon no other consideration, but simply the Fathers good will, to make a gift of it; this dependeth necessarily upon what we shewed before. If that which we have hitherto spoken be not true, this cannot be true, if the Covenant be with condition, and the condition to be performed for the Covenant, then certainly *Christ* is not a meer gift; That which a man buyes or payes for, he makes a reckoning of it as due debt, he cannot make a reckoning of it as a gift: But you see it plainly in the Text, that *Christ* is given to be a covenant, *Christ* is not bought for to be a Covenant, he is not paid for. Covenants between men I know are thus, If a man have a house or land to sell, there are Articles drawn up and agreed upon; and he that must have the land, must pay for it: But beloved, it is not so in this Covenant; but it is as in Covenants that are deeds of gifts, which run thus, I will freely bestow this upon you: So doth God bestow his *Christ* freely, passing him over to men, without any thing from them in consideration of this *Christ* which is bestowed. And this imports two things. I say, that *Christ* is a gift, imports two things.

First, that in the participation of *Christ*, God requires nothing of man, he expects nothing from man in consideration of that *Christ* he bestowes upon him. I say, he doth require nothing, he doth expect nothing, he will take nothing; nay, he will not give *Christ* unto men, except they will take him freely, without bringing any thing for him.

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Secondly, this *gift Christ*, being given unto men, imports that there is no vilenesse, no sinfulness, no kind of wretchednesse of man, that can be any barre to a man from having a full part and portion in this Christ: A *gift* implies them both, I shall open them both as clear as may be.

First, I say, Christ is conveyed unto men as a *gift*, without the Fathers requiring any thing of them, or expecting any thing from them, but onely barring them from bringing or thinking to bring any thing to this end, that they may have a part or share in Christ.

I shall first declare, and make cleare, that it is directly contrary to the nature of a *gift* considered really as a *gift*) to require, or expect any thing in consideration of that which is given. When things are passed over to a man upon consideration, either they are passed over by bargain and sale, or els by way of bribe. When a man desires his cause may goe well in a suit of Law, hee will give the Judge something; but the consideration must be that the Judge shall carry the cause on his side; This that the Judge receives is not a *gift*, but a bribe, because something must be done for it. When a man must have such and such lands, or such and such goods, and there is a contract, you must give me so much money, and you shall have them; these lands and goods are not *gifts*, when money must be paid for them.

If we must bring any thing to the Father in consideration of *Christ* the Covenant, then here is a bargain and sale between the Father and us: I will give you my Christ, but you must bring me works,

works, to wit, broken, and clean, and changed hearts, and the like : this is a meere bargain and sale. In *Rom. 4.* you shall finde plainly and clearly, how the Apostle doth directly overthrow the being of a gift upon this supposition, if it could be received, that a man must bring any thing to his justification, hee plainly affirms, a gift ceaseth to be a gift when any such thing comes in, verse 4. *Now to him that worketh is the reward reckoned, not of grace, but of debt.* Mark, I pray you, well, to him that worketh, that is, would you bring any thing that is a work to God ? would you bring your humiliations, your prayers, and these shall be the conditions that God may perform his Covenant ? Doe you bring any thing in the world, and work any inherent righteousness ? Then saith the Apostle, *the reward*, that is, the accomplishment of the Covenant, *is not reckoned of grace* ; If you bring works, the gift ceaseth to be a gift ; it must be reckoned to be a debt. Either then you must lay downe all works, and let them cease in the businesse of the covenant, and partaking of Christ, else you must conclude, you must receive Christ of grace, but of debt. And the Apostle doth deliver it, and make it more cleare, *Rom. 11. 6.* *And if by grace*, that is, by gift, for grace and gift you must understand are all one : Grace is nothing but the favour of God freely, and of his own accord communicated : *And if by grace, then it is no more of works : otherwise grace is no more grace : but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise works is no more works.* If you bring grace unto works, or works unto grace ; either the one or the other,

other, or both, are made void : as much as to say, These two things are inconsistent things, they cannot stand together, that wee should partake of Christ through grace and works both, they will not stand together, Grace must stand alone, or works alone : for one doth directly overthrow the other.

And beloved, to speake freely to you of these *Work-mongers*, these *buyers of Christ*. that would bring something with them to partake of Christ ; what would they bring ? They say they will bring a good heart, or a changed life : I ask, what price is this you bring ? Doe you bring any thing of your own, or that which is Gods already ? Suppose your hearts be never so purged and cleansed, what bring you to God ? You bring that which already is his own; As much as to say, a man owes another 1000. pounds, and hee will come and bring this thousand pound, for lands worth fifty pounds by the yeare : no he must bring a thousand pounds more if hee will purchase the land : even so it is for a person to bring works for Christ, which works thou owest unto God already : No, first pay thy first debt which thou owest, and then if thou hast any more, bring that unto God to purchase Christ withall. But alas, *when you have done all, you are unprofitable servants* : for all you have done, is not yours, it was due from you before : How then can any thing you doe be a consideration to purchase Christ withall ?

Moreover, you that will bring works, and in consideration of them expect a part in Christ, what
are

are the works you bring? A whip you shall have as soon as a Christ in regard of your works: Oh the filthinesse of all the works of men, as they doe work them! There is nothing but filthinesse in them; Yea (saich Paul) I count all things dung, that I may be found in him, not having my owne righteousness: Therefore beloved, as it is a most presumptuous pride in men; so it is the grossest ignorance that can be, to dream of any thing that they have, doe, or can doe in the partaking of Christ, they doe directly overthrow the nature of a gift. Have thou but one thought once, that God will accept thee in Christ, upon consideration that thou hast performed thus and thus; this very thought doth directly destroy Christ, as considered to be a gift: for if he be a gift, then he comes without any consideration whatsoever.



SERMON VII.

The second Sermon upon this Text.

Esay 42. 6, 7. *And I will give thee for a Covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, &c.*

IN the next place, as it is against the nature of a gift, so God doth not expect, nor will accept of any thing from men in consideration of Christ: And for this the Scriptures are plaine and cleare, that the Father expects nothing,

thing in the world of men, no one qualification or spirituall disposition, before or upon the communicating of his Son *Christ* unto men. I will but name some few passages to clear this to you, that I may not seem to come in my own name, in this I have delivered.

Consider amongst other passages, that in *Isa. 55.* it is plain there, you may see that God looks for nothing in the world of men, be they what they will, be they in the worst condition, no matter what it is, they are the men to whom *Christ* offers himselfe, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, saith Christ, that is, every one that hath but a minde to this Christ, every one that would take him, may have him: Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters, and hee that hath no money; Come ye, buy, and eat, yea come, buy wine and milke without money, and without price. Wherefore do yee spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soules delight it self in fatnesse: Eat, but not buy; for it is said, buy without money; you may eat without price, and that which you shall eat is fatnesse; Mark what followes, Encline your eare; and come unto me, heare and your soules shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David: Here you see the covenant mentioned; But what doth God require here in the Covenant? No money, no price; The Covenant runs all upon mercy, it is an everlasting Covenant indeed, and an everlasting Covenant of mercy. Now mercy is the doing a thing onely and cheerly of gift; If a man will forgive a debtor, and aske*

aske nothing of him , then he is a mercifull man : So farre as men give, so farre are they mercifull; so far as they sell, there is no mercy in that. But here is neither mony , nor price, nor any thing at all in consideration of the Covenant.

Likewise in Hosea 14.4. God saith by the Prophet, *I will heale their backslidings, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from them* : He will love you freely, that's the term : He will ask nothing for that good he will doe unto you , it shall be freely, and what's more free then gift ?

Look also into that notable place, worthy of all consideration, Ephes. 2.4. where the Apostle speaks most admirable sweetly to this point , of giving and communicating Christ , and all that is Christ unto men, meerly of grace, meerly of gift, without consideration of any thing in the World ; And there you have the reason, why God will doe it meerly of gift, and upon no other ground or cause at all, in vers. 4. saying, *But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us ; here is the great principle that gives being to all that follows. Even when we were dead in sinnes, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace yee are saved) mark what followes, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Iesus: that in the ages to come hee might shew the exceeding riches of his Grace in his kindnesse towards us through Christ Iesus : for by grace are yee saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.* Here you see how notably the Apostle takes off all things in the world, whereby men may imagine to move God to shew kindnesse, and

give his *Christ* unto them ; and attributes all to the riches of Gods grace, becaule of that Love where-with he loved us : hence is it , that he bestowes *Christ* by grace : and by this grace are wee saved , and that not of our selves, not of our works, lest any should boast.

I will not recite many places ; one more and then I have done with this. Look into the last of the *Revelation*, you shall see *Christ* is so a gift passed over unto men, that God looks for, asks, requires nothing of men to their partaking of him. In vers. 17. *Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely : No matter for bringing of any thing with you : Have you a mind to him ? Take him freely. God scornes to make a sale of his Son. if men take him as a deed of gift well and good : if they will have him upon other terms, God never means to part with him. I tell you beloved, could you bring Angelicall perfection and obedience, and present that unto the Father as a motive to him to bestow his *Christ* upon you ; if you dare offer the perfectest righteousness in the world for *Christ*; I say, you shall be accursed for it. If we (saith the Apostle, Gal. 1.8.) or an Angell from heaven preach any other Gospell unto you, then that we have preached unto you, any other Gospel, then Salvation, and Participation of *Christ*, by grace and free gift (for that is the doctrine he had established before, and through the whole Epist. to the *Galatians*, doth maintain) such a person bee accursed, saith Paul. And concerning those that will preach any other doctrine, will establish any righteousness of man,*

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and pervert the people of God from the sincerity of the Doctrine and Gospel they have received; the Apostle is so eager against them, that he breaks out into this passionate expression, *Gal. 5. 12. I would they were even cut off, which trouble you.* In the same Epistle to the Galatians, and upon the self same ground we have in hand, doth he thus expresse himselfe, and all because they overthrew the great intent of the Lord, and those great thoughts he hath of himselfe, namely, that the World may see what a God of grace he is. If a man comes with work towards the enjoyment of Christ, he doth overthrow the grace of God, and frustrate the great end for which God sent Christ into the world: for as you see it plainly there in the Epistle to the Ephesians, the place before mentioned, the Lord therefore comes to give Christ, to set forth the praise of the glory of his free grace.

Secondly, this gift, (Christ I meane) given as a Covenant, imports unto you, that as the Father looks for nothing of men to partake of Christ: So also it doth imply, *There is nothing in men, though never so vile, that can debarre a person from a part in this Christ.* Some will not have Christ except they can pay for him; others dare not meddle with Christ, because they are so vile and wretched Creatures, that they think it impossible that Christ should belong to such wretched persons as they are. You know not (saith one) what an abominable sinner I am; you look upon others, but their sins are but ordinary, but mine are of a deep dye, and I shall die in them. The rebellion of my heart is another kind of rebellion then is in others.

Beloved

Beloved, let me tell you freely from the Lord : Let men deem you as they will, and make your self as bad as you can ; I tell you from the Lord, and I will make it good, there is not that sinfull-nesse that can be imagined in a creature, that can be able to separate or debarre any of you from a part in Christ; even while you are thus sinfull, *Christ* may be your Christ. Nay, I go further, suppose one person in this Congregation should not onely be the vilest sinner in the world, but should have all the sins of the whole world, besides what he himselfe hath committed ; if all these were laid upon the back of him, he should be a greater sinner then now he is; yet, if hee should beare all the sinnes of others, as I said, there is no bar to this person, but Christ may be his portion : *hee bore the sinnes of many,* (saith the text) but he bare them not as his owne, he bare them for many. Suppose the many that are sinners should have all their sins translated to one in particular; still here is no more sinnes then *Christ* died for, though they be all collected up together. If other mens sins were translated upon you, and they had none, then they needed no Christ, all the need they have of Christ were translated to you, and then whole Christ should be yours.

Doe but observe, beloved, the strain of the Gospel, you shall find that no sin in the world can be a bar to hinder a person from having a part in this Christ that is given. Look upon the condition of persons (as they are revealed in the Gospel) to whom *Christ* is reached out; and the consideration of their persons will plainly shew to you, that there is no kind of sinfullnesse can barre a person

from having a part in CHRIST.

Look into *Ezekiel 16.* quite through : The person is there considered in a state of blood, of menstruousnesse, of vilenesse and greatest filthinesse that can be supposed : and when no eye could pity such a person, or doe any good to him : I passed by thee (saith Christ) thy time was the time of love, I swore unto thee, I entred into covenant with thee, and thou becomest mine. Construe this in a spirituall sense, conceive of a spirituall estate of filth, proportionable to a naturall estate of filth : That very time of the vilest of our spirituall filthinesse, is the time of Christs love when he enters into covenant. Yea, but sure the case is altered, before Christ actually swears. No, then washed I thee with water, yea I thoroughly washed away thy blood, When? Even then when I swore unto thee, and entred into covenant with thee, &c. First he did swear, and then hee did wash them; and not wash them, and then swear unto them, and entred into covenant with them. First, I entred into covenant with thee, then washed I thee with water, and then put I jewells upon thee, &c. The first he doth is, hee enters into covenant, and the people become his people, and then hee takes them in hand, and washeth and purgeth them, and not before.

Consider Christs owne expression, I came to save and to save that which was lost; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; the whole need not a Physician, but they that are sicke : Here still the persons are considered in the worst condition (as some might think) rather then in the best. Our Saviour is pleased to expresse himselfe in a direct

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contrary way to the opinion of men. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners : The poore Publican that had nothing to plead for himselfe, went away more justified then the proud Pharisee, that pleaded with God ; *I thank thee that I am not (such an one.*

Men think Righteousnesse brings them neere to Christ : beloved, Righteousnesse is that which puts a man away from Christ : Stumble not at the expression, it is the clear truth of the Gospel : Not simply a doing of service, and duty ; doth put away from Christ ; but upon the doing of duty and service, to expect acceptance with Christ, or participation in Christ, this kind of righteousness is the only separation between Christ and a people : and whereas no sinfulness in the world can debarre a people, their Righteousnesse may debarre them.

I need not tell you what I have so often mentioned, that there must be a beleiving in him that justifies the ungodly, *Rom 4.* What can you looke for of an ungodly person ? If there can be any bar in the world to hinder a man from taking Christ, you would think it should be ungodlinesse, it is the ground of most and all mens fears : but if the term ungodlinesse be not bad enough, consider, Christ goes further, even unto Rebellion, hee hath redeemed gifts for the rebellious, *Psal 68 18.* *Thou hast ascended on high, and led captivitie captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God* *might dwell among them.*

Object. But some may be ready to say to me, though God be never so free in giving Christ

unto men; yet they may never have a part in him, except they have hands to take and receive him.

Ans. I answer, I beseech you consider, and I answer peremptorily, that though men have no hands to take Christ, yet may they receive him. I will clear this a little to you, first by illustration, by way of similitude: A poore indigent person is speechlesse, he hath never a tongue; he is handlelesse, hee hath never a hand: Hee cannot aske with the tongue, he cannot take with the hand; if you have a mind to give, I ask, can you not give to such a person, because hee hath not a tongue to speak, nor a hand to take? You may behold and see the pitifull case of such a man, and your compassions may be stirred in you: and whereas he cannot put a garment upon his owne naked back, yet you may provide raiment, and put it upon his back with your hand, as well as if he had put it on himself. And thus God deales in bestowing Christ upon men: we are dumb and cannot speak. *Wee know not what to ask as we ought,* saith the Apostle, *Rom. 8.* But God, being rich in compassion, hee beholds our miserablenesse; his own bowels stir him up; Altho though there bee no language in the creature to move him, yet out of these bowells of his, hee will shew pittie and mercy to us, and reach out his Christ to those that have no hands to receive him, and faith to beleeve in him. It is the Lord puts Christ on the back of those persons to whom he hath pittie and compassion. I say, that although we have no hand, yet the Lord puts this his Christ upon us, it is not we that put him on, but the Lord that puts him upon us.

Secondly, to resolve the case more fully and clearly, observe a distinction very needfull to be observed and considered: There is a twofold receiving of Christ, there is first, a passive recipiency: secondly, there is an active recipiency.

First, there is a passive receiving of Christ, and that is so that Christ is received without any hands; but in an active receiving of him, he is not received without hands: You will say, what is this passive receiving of Christ? I answer, a passive receiving of Christ, is just such a receiving of him, as when a froward patient takes a purge, or some bitter physick; hee shuts his teeth against it, but the Physitian forceth his mouth open, and poures it downe his throat, and so it workes against his will, by the over-ruling power of one over him, that knowes it is good for him. Thus I say, there is a passive recipiency or receiving of Christ, which is the first receiving of him, when Christ comes by the gift of the Father to a person, whiles he is in the stubbornnesse of his own heart, being froward and crosse, and the Father doth force open the spirit of that person, and poures in his Son in spite of the receiver.

There is such a kind of recipiency mentioned in Scripture, Jer. 31. 18, 19. *I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himselfe thus, Thou hast chastised mee, and I was chastised, as a Bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, turn thou me, and I shall be turned, thou art the Lord my God. Surely, after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea even confounded. Marke, now Ephraim (who is the representation of*

the Church) stands affected and disposed : when God comes first to tame and break the spirit of Ephraim : God is faine to get upon Ephraim , as an horse-rider is faine to get upon an unruly horse, that was never broken ; he must fether him upon all foure, that he may stand still before he get up. So God must fether Ephraim before he can get up, before he can tame him ; *I was as a Bullock unaccustomed to the Yoake* ; nothing but kicking and spurning at the first , afterwards Ephraim becomes more gentle ; *when I was converted , I smote upon my thigh and was confounded* : but before, Ephraim was as a bullock unaccustomed to the Yoak. Hence it is, beloved, that the entrance of Christ into a person is attributed unto the power of Christ : *Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power* ; The power of the Lord must come over a person, before Christ can have a possession of that person , in regard of the crosnesse of the spirit of man to the pleasure of Christ.

At the first then , there may be a *passive* receiving of Christ, by which Christ may enter , and doth enter into the spirit , though the soule reach not forth the hand to take him in ; but rather on the contrary part, fight against him by keeping him from entring : But now when this Christ is poured into the spirit of a man by the power of the Lord, then he begins to work, to break, and to tame the spirit, to be at his own beck and pleasure ; when Christ hath once revealed himselfe, and made the soule behold his beauty , and acquainted the soule with his excellency , then the soule begins to embrace him and to hold him fast, and will not let him goe.

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Here comes in the *second Act* of receiving *Christ*, when we take him perceiving he is a friend and comming for good, and that there is no good but by him, *Christ* is considered as given of the Father, and being given, the Father hath no regard to any thing a man can doe for him, or any thing a person can do against him.

Quest. But it may be, before I leave this, you will ask, is not *unbelieve* a bar to have a part in *Christ*?

Ans. It is a barre to hinder the manifestation of *Christ* in the spirit, but it is not a bar to hinder one from having a part in *Christ*, on whom God doth bestow him. It is true, that you nor I can say by experience that *Christ* is our *Christ* untill we believe; as long as we continue in totall unbelief, we cannot conclude to our own spirits that *Christ* is ours: But unbelief is not simply a bar to the bestowing of *Christ* to such a person; He bestowes him without any regard to belief or unbelief: If unbelief should be a bar to hinder *Christ* from being bestowed upon persons, where is the person to whom *Christ* should be bestowed? There is no person under heaven considered simply as ungodly, and under the notion of ungodlineffe, but he is considered as an unbeliever, as well as a sinner in other respects: So that to the Fathers giving of *Christ*, unbelief is not a bar: Only for the inward satisfaction of the soule and spirit, unbelief is a bar, a soule cannot be resolved till it doth believe.

3. And so now I come to consider of the third thing I propounded, namely:

What it is for *Christ* to be given to open the blind. There

There are two things very remarkable in it, that he is given to doe this thing: For hence I infer, and the thing it self will clearly beare it;

1. That Christ is actually passed over to a soule, and a possession of *Christ* is delivered unto persons, before ever their blind Eyes are opened, or they come out of prison, that is, before they have any gracious qualifications whatsoever; and this is a truth that followes upon the former, that Christ himselfe is the first spirituall gift that the Father doth bestow upon any; before there be wrought any opening of the Eyes, which is the first of all gracious qualifications wrought in a person.

2. Secondly, that the opening of the Eyes, and bringing the prisoners out of prison, is the sole work of Christ, none doth this businesse but *Christ* alone when he is once given.

The first will need a little clearing (and therein the second will be sufficiently evidenced) being a truth of very great concernment; and yet but seldome seriously considered; I say, that Christ is actually given and passed over to men, and made really their Christ, before ever there be any gracious qualifications put into the soule of such a person. I say as before, Observe this caution, I speak of Gods giving Christ unto men, not of the manifestation of this Christ unto a person to be his Christ: There is and must be faith, as I said before, for the manifestation of him to be our Christ: but there is no qualification wrought in the heart of any person, before this Christ be actually passed over, and made his Christ in the Covenant. Now I say, Christ is given and passed over as

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Christ to such a person, before hee have any gracious qualifications; I do not mean as some doe, that God did actually decree that Christ should be Christ unto such and such persons, before he did put any qualifications in them, this is a truth indeed; but I say further, that God gives actually possession of this Christ, and Christ takes possession in that person before there be any qualifications wrought in him: Now Christ is given over, not only to perform some common Acts of Gods providence, but he is given over as the covenant it self, He enters, and actually justifies a person, before any qualification be wrought in him.

Now I shall endeavour to clear this unto you by all possible evidence I can: The Scripture is plain for it in *Isa 61.1,2,3.* and so forward: there you shall see that Christ is actually given over unto men, before any gracious qualifications whatsoever be wrought in them, *The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,* saith Christ there; For they are his words, as he himself applyes them, in the Sermon he preached himself, *Luke 4.18. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poore, hee hath sent me to heale the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blinde, and to set at liberty them that are bruised.*

Observe it, I pray you, Here Christ hath a businesse to doe in the world, his businesse is, to binde up the broken hearted; and hee is anointed, the Lord hath anointed him to this businesse. What is that anointing? the Lord hath separated him, designed him to this businesse, and according to his designation doth

doth place him where hee may doe his businesse, this is meant by *anointing*. Now when a man is called out, and set apart, and sent about such a businesse; he must be there corporally or virtually before thats done, which he is sent to doe. He is sent to doe the thing, therefore he must be there where it is to be done: A man is not said to doe a thing, when it is done before he come; If *Christ* be sent to bind up the broken hearted, and if it be his busines; certainly they are not bound up before hee comes to bind them, and if hee comes to bind them up, then hee is present before they are bound up.

Obj But peradventure you will say, by this text, here are *broken hearts*; first, before *Christ* be sent to binde them up, therefore there must be broken hearts before *Christ* come to the soule.

Ans. To this I answer, that a *broken heart* is to be considered in a double sense, either first simply for a heart undone; or secondly, for a heart sensible of its owne undoing: You know men are said to be undone and broken, when their estates are broken, and their credit crackt: and secondly, they may be said to be broken when they have examined their own Books, and finde that they are broken, and so seek to their creditors to make agreement; persons may be considered as broken persons, supposing and considering what their condition is simply in it self, as they are undone in their condition; or else secondly, as they apprehend themselves to be undone, and so make agreement.

Now these two kinds of brokennesse of heart considered, I answer: First, it is most certainly true in the first sense, there is a broken heart, before

fore Christ is considered as present to binde it up, that is, persons are really undone, before Christ comes to restore them; but these persons are not sensible of their own brokennesse of heart, untill Christ come and make them sensible of it.

Therefore, if you will speak of the sense of breaking, I flatly affirme, *christ* is actually given, and come unto the soule, before sensiblenesse be wrought in the soule. Marke but the Covenant as it is recited in *Ezekiel* 36.26. Who is it deales with the heart of man to take away the stoniness of it, and to give a meltingness unto it? *I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh*: Who is that? It is hee that did obtaine a more excellent Ministry, by how much hee was the Mediator of a better Covenant, even the Mediator of this covenant, and it is hee that takes away the stony heart. And if he breaks the stony heart, how can there be said to be a broken heart, before *Christ* come to doe it?

Therefore in brief know this, Christ is sent unto men, as to bind up their hearts when they are broken, so graciously to break those hearts when they are hard. 1. He breaks them, then he binds them up. He is sent to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of prison doores to the prisoners: People thinke by their humiliations, sorrows, mournings, and obedience, and such like to get Christ; but it is plaine, that the very spirit of mourning is the worke of *Christ*, upon a person, and Christ is present to worke it too. So in *Zachar* 12.10. *I will poure upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace* and

and supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn : who was that poured this spirit of grace, supplication, and mourning? I, saith Christ; I? Who was that I? It was he that was pierced, upon whom they should look that had pierced him, *They shall look upon mee whom they have pierced*; This is he that poured out the spirit of supplication and mourning. So if it be Christ that was pierced, as is plain, then it is also plaine, that Christ poured out the Spirit of grace, supplication and mourning : how then can they mourn before Christ comes, when it is he after hee is come that doth this very thing.

Object any qualification whatsoever, and it will appear most evident and plain, that it is Christ himself after he is come that works it. Even saith it self which is called the Radicall grace of all graces : It is not given untill Christ himself be given to men, which works this very Faith, *Heb. 11. 2. Looking (saith the Apostle) unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith* : He is the Author, what saith can there be then till he comes to work it?

Consider that in *Psal. 68. 18.* compared with *Ephes 4.8* and you shall plainly see Christ is given unto men, before there be any qualifications of any grace whatsoever in man, *Thou hast received gifts for the rebellious*, saith the Psalmist, *thou hast given gifts unto men*, saith the Apostle : Put them both together, Christ received gifts for, and gave gifts unto rebellious men : consider I pray, beloved, what gracious dispositions and qualifications are considerable in rebellious men; as they are rebellious, there can be none considered : But Christ received

received, and gave gifts to the rebellious. Therefore Christ is given, and accordingly doth give whatsoever any person hath, before he hath any thing.

There are many notable arguments in Scripture most absolutely establishing this truth, that Christ is given and made over unto men, before they have any qualification whatsoever, as Col. 1. 18. Where Christ is called, *the head of the body, the Church, and the beginning*: These two metaphors illustrate and establish this truth.

First, *Christ is the Beginning*, He that is the beginning of all things, he is before all things, not only in the being of nature before all things; not actually present before all things be begun. He that is the builder of the house, doth not come after the house is begun to be builded: but he is present at the place before a stone is laid, because he is the man that must lay it, he is the beginning of it; and if he be the beginning, whatsoever is begun, is after him that is the beginning.

Secondly, *Christ is the Head*: This is the other metaphor whereby is set forth that *Christ* must upon necessity be in the soule, be actually passed over unto men, before they can have any gracious qualifications. A head is the fountain of all animal, and sensitive spirits, and of all motion: without a head, a man cannot hear, see, walk, feel, stir, nor do any thing, seeing all these operations come from this head. Consider the body as headlesse, and all the senses are absent, and without a head nothing is done. *Christ is the Head of his Church*, (so saith the Apostle) that is, he is the foun-

fountain of all spirituall sence and motion. You may as soone conceive that a man is able to see whilst he hath not a head ; as to think, a man can have spirituall Eyes, whether the *Eye of Faith* to behold *Christ*, or the *Eyes of Mourning* to lament ones wretchednesse, before there be actually the presence and conjunction of *Christ* the head, unto such a body. Beloved, to think a man can have any spirituall sight, before *Christ* be actually united to the soule, is all one, as for a man to think to see, before he hath Eyes. The Eyes are placed in the head, both the Organs, faculties, and spirits, all are in the head. How can a man see, that hath neither Eyes nor Spirits to feed the Eyes ? which he hath not, while he hath not a head, where all these are planted : *Christ* must be in the Eye. and present to give sight : therefore the Scripture doth expressly say, that he is given for a Covenant to open the blind eyes : if to open them, then they are not opened, before he gives them sight.

And thirdly, as *Christ* is called a head, and a beginning : so also is he called *Life* frequently in the Scripture. *I am the way, the truth, and the life ; no man cometh to the Father but by mee*, Joh. 14. 6. Can a man be an active creature, before there be life breathed into him ? The Lord (saith the Text) at the creation, breathed into man the breath of life, and so he became a living soule. He was like a stone, till he had life : But now, saith the Apostle, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*, Gal. 2. 20. And, by the grace of God, *I am that I am*, and his grace that was bestowed upon me, was not in vaine ; but I laboured more abundantly then they all. *Paul* was an active soule.

How

How? By the grace of God, 1 Cor. 15. 10 That is, as a body without a soule is dead, so every person in spirituall actions is wholly dead, till Christ the soule of that soule be infused into him to animate and enliven him; I shall not spend more time in urging more arguments; though I might be large, to shew that Christ is the first thing given unto us, before all other whatsoever. For if this light be not enough, we must wait till the Lord in his time will reveale his truth.

4. And now in a word or two consider, *who these persons are to whom Christ is given to be a Covenant.* All this is good news, will some say, to those unto whom it is sent. Many thousands cry out, Oh, but it is none of my portion, nor my portion, that Christ should be given as a Covenant to me.

I shall not be large in this, though some may expect it: the Text will tell in part, who those are to whom he is given for a Covenant, to wit, *The people, and the Gentiles*, one as well as another. He gives Christ to persons without respect of persons, to Jewes and Gentiles. You shall find through the whole course of the Scripture, the persons to whom Christ is exhibited are still expressed in the most generall terms: If a man will know for whom Christ came, it is answered, *He came to seeke and to save those that are lost; in due time hee came to dye for the ungodly; and came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; and while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* The Scripture still runs upon this strain. why then should any person come and cry; he died not for me, he is not given for me? Why? Art thou a sinner? He was given for thee, if thou beest a sinner.

M

The

The King puts forth a Proclamation, and in it he pardons all theeves : what mad or foolish theefe will say, Oh, but the King doth not mean me, hee may mean others, but not me ! why ? Hee means theevs in generall, he excepts none, Why shouldest thou say *not me* ? if there be the name of theeves in generall, without particular mention of some kind of theeves, they will come in, and take their portion: Beloved, so Christ deals with men, he is given to the people, to the Gentiles. Art thou of the people ? Art thou of the Gentiles ? If thou art, why is he not given to thee ? Nay, more, it is the people and Gentiles considered as sinners.

Ob. But some will be ready to say, you know he is not given to all people, and all Gentiles, some do miscarry, and possibly I may be amongst them that doe miscarry : but how shall I know, that I am amongst the number of such sinners that shall not miscarry, and that my portion is in this Christ ?

Beloved, here observe by the way, now wee are speaking of *knowing* whether Christ be my Christ, or no, not simply of Christs being ours, but of Christs manifestation, or of knowing him to be ours. How shall I know it ? You will say. There are Labyrinths in which men may walke, and by hap they may chance to hit the right, in the finding of this great truth, so much searched after, How a man may know whether Christ be his Christ, or no ? To lead you a plaine and a sure way ; the best way for any man to know whether Christ be his or no, is to consider the conveyance in which Christ is made over to men. See the terms of conveyance, and according to these terms, such is the security

security of your title. Now the terms of conveyance (as I have often told you) are only such, as in a Deed of Gift, and a deed of gift universally exhibited and reached out. Therefore I must tell you beloved, there is no better way to know your portion in Christ, then upon the generall tender of the Gospel, to conclude absolutely he is yours, and so, without any more adoe, to take him, as tendred to you, on his word: and this taking of him upon a generall tender, is the greatest security in the world, that Christ is your Christ; say unto your souls (and let not this be contradicted, seeing *Christ* hath reached out himself to sinners as sinners) my part is as good as any mans. Set downe thy rest here; question it not, but beleeve it; it is as good security as God can make thee; God hath promised, venture thy soul upon it, without seeking for further security. But some will say, he doth not belong to me: why not to thee? He belongs to sinners as sinners. And if there be no worse then sinfulness, rebellions, and enmity in thee, he belongs to thee, as well as to any in the world. And there is nothing at all can give thee a certainty hee is thine, but receiving of him upon these terms: *Hee came to his owne, and his owne received him not; but to as many as received him, mark that, hee gave power to become the sons of God.* Hee receiveth sinners, as sinners: He never shut out one of those thousands, that came upon the tender of the Gospel, he never put any by; but to as many as received him, to them hee gave power to become the sons of God. Bring mee any one instance in the whole book of God, of any one that hath come to Christ, and taken Christ upon

the tender of the Gospel, and yet Christ hath put this person by. It is true, in a shallow matter, concerning a bodily cure, the woman comes to Christ, and at the first he would not heare, then hee calls her Dog: yet before they parted, Christ not onely accepts the woman, but breaks out into admiration, *Oh woman, great is thy faith!* But I say in the businesse of partaking of Christ, shew me an instance of any in all the Book of God, that have ventured upon the generall tender of Christ, which was rejected. If there be no example in all the Scripture, from whence fetch you this bitterneesse of your owne spirits, that you may not, that you dare not close with Christ?

Quest. But you will say to me, If this taking of him be the best security, how shall I know whether I beleeve or no? Or how shall I know whether this my taking is not a counterfeit taking, but a solid, substantiall, reall taking of Christ.

Ans. I answer by the reality of the thing. Doe you it indeed? If you doe it indeed, it is a reall taking. If a man should aske you, How doe you know the Sun shines? The light of the Sunne doth shew it self, and by its light wee know it shines. How shall I know I beleeve? There is a light in faith that doth discover it self unto men: the soules that doth really close with Christ, may conclude he doth so. If you give six pence to a poor man, and then ask him how doe you know I have given you this six pence, and that you have it? Why, saith he, I have it in my hand, and finde, and feel I have it. So, aske your hearts this question: How doe

know

know I beleeve in Christ ? Doe I cast my heart upon this truth ? Doe I receive it as a truth, that I doe beleeve, or doe I reject it, or will not receive it ? Then I doe not beleeve. But if you sit downe, and rest upon this truth, and receive it, and doe in realitie beleeve it; then you may absolutely conclude Christ is yours. In respect of time I cannot amplifie any further: but I hope for the present this will give satisfaction. A word or two for application, and so I will conclude.

Is this a truth, as hath been by Scripture proved to you, *That Christ is given a covenant to men to open their blind eyes* ? Then beloved, it is plain, they begin at the wrong end of the bottom, who begin to wind up at the graciousnesse of their owne spirits, from thence to have comfort. If you begin at any other end then at Christ to get grace and comfort, you doe as they doe that take the inmost end of the bottom of the thred, and begin to ravell there : So that little or no work is done, but much clutter, and many a knot, and broken ends made, and the worke quite spoiled: whereas if they had begun at the outmost end of the bottom, it would have run without disturbance. Beloved, Christ is given to open mens blinde eyes, goe whither you will, you shall never have your eyes spiritually purged, except you goe to Christ: Oh what adoe is here with men, or in men, with their breaking their owne hearts, and forsaking their sins ! And whither doe they run ? They run to their *inherent righteousness*, to their *qualifications*, to their *prayers*, to their *tears*, to their *humiliations* and *sorrows*, and *reformations*, *universal obedience* and the like. But is this to run to

free grace, and free mercy in Christ; Nay, Christ alas, he is never thought of, Christ is clean forgotten, and wholly neglected, and not considered all this while: Beloved, here is a ploughing with a wooden plough; here is a working upon a dead horse, or rather with a dead horse: What is in the heart of a man to plough up the rock of his owne heart? No marvell, beloved, that you sweat and toile and moile all the day long, and all lies in the same case it did: *There is no strength to bring forth*, because you goe in your own strength or the strength of the creature, and not in the strength of the Lord *Jesus*.

You know when a Pump is dry, men use not to stand labouring at it till they sweat: but they first come and fetch a bucket of water, and poure the water into the dry Pump, and then they fall to pumping, and by vertue of the water poured in, there comes more water up, and by continuall pumping they fetch out abundance: So beloved, your hearts are dry things, there is no sap, no moisture, no life in them. Christ must first be poured in, before you can get any thing out. Wherefore then stand you labouring and tugging in vaine? O stay no longer, goe to Christ; It is hee that must break thy rocky heart, before the plough can come over it, or at least enter into it. As I told you before, so I tell you againe, you must consider Christ as freely given unto you by the Father, even before you can believe.

There is a story of *Ebedmelech* the blackmore in *Jeremy*, who by his interest and favour with the King, got leave to goe to the dungeon to *Jeremie*

to fetch him out; he carries ropes with him, lets them down, and causeth *Jeremiah* to put them under his arms, and round about him: Now *Jeremiah* by holding fast the ropes, doth not pull him into the pit, but he pulls *Jeremiah* out of the pit to himselfe. I speak this by way of illustration. Christ is our *Ebedmeleck* with the Father, the great King of glory: His dealing prevails that he may have liberty to pluck us poore *Jeremies* out of the pit and *dungeon* of sin and Satan, of misery and destruction. How doth he this? He doth not first send ropes, and then come after, but goes and carries ropes with him. That is, Christ doth not send faith first to believers, and then comes after as drawn by that faith he sent: No, but he comes and brings faith with himselfe to that person; and himselfe being present, lets down this faith to them; and when they have these ropes, they do not draw Christ down to them by this faith, but holding fast faith, Christ drawes them up to himself. So here is not faith first, and then Christ, but Christ comes first and gives faith to apprehend and lay hold upon him: Consider therefore Christ as your *Ebedmeleck*, who comes and reacheth himselfe out to draw you up, by which you may hold Christ; so *Christ* fetcheth you out of the pit.

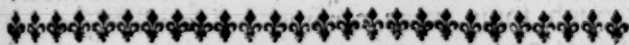
Wherefore (to draw to a conclusion) remember this, as you run to Christ, so shall you prosper in every thing you take in hand. All the businesse that Christ undertakes shall go on a main, whilst the businesse the Creature undertakes shall stand at a stop. Make tryall, begin but with Christ; take him along with you in your entrance upon any thing,

thing, and you have a *mighy Counsellor* to guide and direct you, for so *Christ* is called; and good counsell you know is very usefull for a prosperous expedition of things. Again, you have a *Tower* and *refuge* fully secure to retreat to, in case of extremity, in case of over-mastership. It useth to be a prime piece of policy, being to combate with en enemy, to make sure some good Fort, and to maintain that, so that if the enemy be too strong, they may know whither to go to be hid and saved from the present danger, and without such a refuge they are all liable to be cut off. So doe you begin with *Christ*, make sure of him when you enter into the field of the world, get but this *Fort*, and you have a place of retreat upon all occasions, where there is most certaine security, which *the gates of hell shall not be able to prevaile against*. For *Christ* is that impregnable rock; but this is not all.

Christ is also *Aqua vite*, *water of life*: Take but *Christ* along with you, and then in all your travels, no sooner can you begin to faint, but there is *Aqua vite* at hand, you may drink of it and your spirits shall be refreshed and revived. What shall I say more to you? It is *Christ* that oiles the wheelles of your *Chariots*, and makes you run the wayes of Gods Commandements; 'Tis *Christ* that fills the sailes; you must needs lie at a calme, if he be not present to blow in them; Take *Christ* with you, and you have the wind at command. Many a Mariner would give a world to have such a priviledge, as to command the naturall winds, and to make them blow when he listeth, and which way he listeth; he would never then lie windbound.

Beloved,

Beloved, you that have Christ, you have the wind in your own fists, you may be carried to any port you will. If you have Christ you shall have a swift gale, that you shall saile amaine by the power of Christ. Therefore beloved, if Christ be poured forth, and a gift unto men, and so cheap that you may have him for nothing, only receiving him; Let this be your everlasting cry and song, *None but Christ, none but Christ*; or rather in the language of the Apostle, *I desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*



SERMON VIII.

Christian LIBERTY no Licentious Doctrine.

Joh. 8. 36. *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

Our Saviour here gives a hint to his Apostles, that they should not look to fare better then their master; he speaks in respect of hard usage in the world: For he came into the world to fulfill a gracious and glorious ministry; bringing from the bosome of his Father, the great and unsearchable love the Father had from everlasting in his thoughts towards his own deare ones; and so he takes all opportunities and advantages to publish the glad tydings of
salvati_

salvation to the sons of men; yet met he with much opposition. But although Christ knew full well, that there were many cavillers laid snares to trap him in his words, and that they frequented the common assemblies where Christ preached, to catch something from him, whereby they might have a colour at least to upbraide him, and bring him into danger; I say, although *Christ* knew there were in all such assemblies some Scribes and Pharisees, and such like; yet for all this, when opportunity was offered unto him, he was graciously pleased to use much freedome of speech to them: though some were carping and cavilling at his words and his person; yet some there were to whom the glad tydings of salvation did belong, who by his ministry received these glad tydings, and so were comforted. It seems it fell out thus with Christ, in the two former Chapters, and this out of which I have taken my Text: for in these Chapters Christ was graciously pleased to hold forth the light of the glad tydings of salvation wherein he used, as I said before, much freedome and boldnesse of speech, which occasioned the adversaries of the Gospel to vent their poyson, and spit the venome of their malice against him. He could no sooner speak a word of grace, but presently they were upon the back of him.

These three verses contain in them nothing else but a continued dispute between Christ and his Enemies, intermingled with most admirable sweet and gracious expressions of Christ to his own people. Now in the 30 Vers. of this Chapter, after a large dispute and discourse, the holy Ghost is pleased

pleased to tell us, That *many did beleeve in Christ* upon the words that he had spoken. Here you see a gracious effect upon some, that *Christ* knew beforehand, upon which he tooke encouragement, notwithstanding all the adversaries opposition, to be bold in speaking; and Christ perceiving that his Gospel took effect upon some; nay, many of the people, he turns his discourse from these carpers, with whom he had so long disputed before, and begins to frame his speech to the capacity and condition of these new converts and believers: Therefore in the 31. and 32. verses of this Chapter, our Saviour delivers himself to them in this manner; *If you continue in my words, saith Christ, then are you my Disciples, and the truth shall make you free.*

Now although it be apparent, that Christ doth direct this speech of his to these new believers, yet in the 37 verse of this chapter, these cavillers carp and cavill, whether wittingly or ignorantly, I cannot say; they must needs have Christ to speak this passage unto them; and they presently in a hot and captious way reply upon Christ; Whereas he had said, *they should be free, and the truth should make them free*: That is, as many as did believe: they presently retorted upon Christ, Why? *Wee are Abrahams seed, wee were never in bondage*. How can we be made free? They might have held their tongues, Christ never meant them, he never spake to them; and though they said, *they were never in bondage*; in bondage they were, and in bondage like to be: However Christ did not speake to them, but to believers; yet they will not leave him so, they will have a fling at him; therefore Christ will

will answer their objection again : In the 33. ver. of the chapter they made use of this argument to assert their freedom, said they, *Wee are Abrahams seed, wee were never in bondage* : What doth hee talke of making us free ? He takes off this recoil with a two-edged sword, for there is a double answer to the argument, they make use of. First, therefore Christ shewes what the liberty is, and wherein it stands, he speaks of : Secondly, hee shewes that their plea, is not a good plea for their being *Abrahams seed*, was not a plea sufficient for their freedom. First, Christ shewes what true freedom is, that he thus speaks of, it is namely this abiding in the house for ever.

Secondly, he shews that to be *Abrahams seed* is not enough to make them free, for the answer of Christ is thus, *He that committeth sin, saith hee, is the servant of sin* ; Now the servant abideth not in the house alwayes, but the Sonne abideth in the house for ever : As much as to say ; Suppose you are *Abrahams seed*, yet if you doe commit sinne, for all this you are servants, you are in bondage, you are in bondage to sinne ; and as long as you are servants, and in bondage, you have no liberty. All freedom consists in this especially, that Christ speaks of that to the free indeed, there will be abiding in the house forever : The Apostle, *Gal 5 22, 23* illustrates to us the nature of this freedom, that Christ speakes of in this place, and indeed sets forth the substance of it ; Do you not hear the Law ? you that desire to be under the Law, what saith it ? The Law speakes this, saith the Apostle, *Abraham had two children, the one according to the promise, the other of the bond-*

bond-woman, these are a mystery; *Agar* signifies Mount Sinai in *Arabia*, which genders unto bondage; Now *Agar* was the mother of *Ishmael*; but the seed of the promise is from above. The conclusion is this, saith the Apostle, *Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the sonne of the bond-woman shall not inherit with the sonne of the free-woman*; but hee that is free, is in the inheritance for ever: the bond-woman and her son must not abide in the house for ever, they must be cast out. Christ in this text, doth allude to this of *Abrahams* casting out of *Ishmael*; *Abraham* keeps *Isaac* in the house for ever: As much as to say, there may be those of the seed of *Abraham*, as *Ishmael* was; and yet be cast out, being not the seed of the promise; they may be the seed of *Abraham*, but being the servants of sione, there is no abiding for them. Now our Saviour having repelled and answered their arguments, hee comes, in the words of my text to shew the rise and fountain from whence this freedom he speaks of, springs or takes his first beginning. *If the Son therefore make you free, then are you free indeed.*

The words I have read to you are an hypotheticall proposition, or a conclusion stated upon a supposition, and contain in them these particulars. First, the grace it self held out, and that is *freedom*, *If the Son make you free.* 2. The Originall, or the cause of this *freedom*, that is the Sons making of them so, *If the Sonne make you free.* Thirdly, the qualitie of this freedom, what kind of freedom it is; it is not a shaddowish, or empty, uselesse freedome, but a substantiall freedom, *you are free indeed* (saith the text) *if the Son make you free, then are you free indeed.*

This

This hypotheticall proposition reduced into a categoricall conclusion, is no more but this; *Thy that the Son makes free, they are free indeed.*

Only there is one thing observable from the argument of Christ in this place, that will adde a word to this proposition, these Jews that did dispute with Christ, they pretended that there was no way to full freedom, but by being born of *Abraham*, so their being the seed of *Abraham*, gives them a compleat freedome: Now *Christ* doth take them upon advantage, he will suppose with them in their sense, that if freedome were to be had by any outward priviledge, it should be by being *Abrahams* seed; If therefore *Abrahams* freedome be no freedome, as indeed it is, then there can be no freedome, but by one that is above *Abraham*. Now saith Christ, the Son shall make you free, as much as to say, *Abraham* the freest person in the world, cannot make you free, much lesse can any other make you free, but the Son. So then, the proposition of Christ is this, That they *alone* are indeed free, who have their freedome from the Son of God. I say, they *alone* are free indeed, who are made free only by *Christ*; none in the world, nothing in the world can make free, but the Son of God.

Now that we may suck, and be satisfied at the breasts of consolation (for there is the sincere milk of the word in it) let us take briefly into our consideration these few particulars.

First, what the freedome is, whereof *Christ* speaks in this place.

Secondly, how *Christ* doth make free.

And if time shall serve, Thirdly, who they are that

that are thus made free by **C H R I S T**.

I will begin with the first, *what this freedom is*, whereof *Christ speaks in this place*: for clearing whereof, note first, beloved, that *freedom*, and *liberty* are termes of one and the same signification. It is all one to say, the Son makes free, or the Son gives liberty. Both the Greek word *Eleutheroi*, and the Latine word *liberi*, are promiscuously translated, either free, or men at liberty. It is true I confesse, beloved, this word, *liberty*, hath got an ill name in the world, partly through the abuse of liberty, and partly through the malignancie of some spirits, that strike even at the heart of Christ, through the sides of those that are Christs, laying reproachfull, ignominious, and shamefull names upon them, of Libertinisme. Now because liberty and freedom are thus brought into reproach and disgrace: the true freedom which Christ hath purchased and given, doth require some clearing; lest it perish, and be lost in the rubbish of corrupt liberty; and so the people of God be jeered out of that which is their greatest portion.

I am ashamed to speak it, I would there were not occasion, that which is the very life, and the sole comfort of the members of Christ Jesus, becomes such a reproach, through the malignity of enemies of the Gospel of *Christ*, that the very believers themselves are almost ashamed to goe under the name of that that is their greatest glory. To be called a *Libertine*, is the gloriousst title under heaven; take a *Libertine* for one that is truly free by *Christ*. To be made free by *Christ*, in proper construction, is no other but this; to be made a *Libertine*.

bertine by *Christ* : I do not say to be made a *Libertine* in the corrupt sence of it, but to be a *Libertine* in the true and proper sence of the word. It is true indeed, *Christ* doth not give liberty unto licentiousnes of life and conversation, of which we shall speak more by and by. But a reall and true liberty, *Christ* hath purchased, and given to all his members.

That we may the better understand therefore what this *Freedom* is that *Christ* hath purchased, and doth bestow upon believers ; and thereby save it from the reproach of corrupt and *licentious Liberty* : understand beloved, that there is a threefold liberty. First, a *morall*, or a *civill liberty*. Secondly, a *sensuall* and *corrupt liberty*. Thirdly, there is a *spirituall* and *Divine Liberty*.

A *morall* and *civill liberty* is that which these Jews spake of, (misinterpreting the sence of *Christ*) such a liberty and freedom as you use to have in your Cities, when a man hath served out his time, he is a *free-man*, he hath the freedom of the City, he hath liberty to trade in the City : So *Paul* understood liberty, when he spake with the Centurion, the Centurion said he bought it with a great deale of money : but saith *Paul*, I was so born : I was born a *Roman*. But of this liberty *Christ* speaks not here.

Secondly, there is a *corrupt liberty*, that the Apostle speaks of *Gal. 5. 13*. He tells us thus, that we are called unto liberty ; but saith he, make not use of this liberty as an occasion to the flesh. A *licentious liberty* is nothing else but this, namely, when men turn the grace of God into wantonnesse, and abusing the Gospel of *Christ*, continue in sin, that grace might abound. Unto which the Apostle doth affix an abhorrency.

God forbid, saith he, any man should make use of such a liberty as this. I am confident of it, and affirm boldly, there is not one man made free by Christ doth make it his rule, namely, *to be bold to commit sinne with greedinesse, because of the redemption that is in the Blood of Christ*: But that Christ who hath redeemed from sin and wrath, hath also redeemed from a vain conversation; and there shall not be a making use of the grace of God, as an emboldening, and an encouraging to break out into *licentiousnesse*. All that have this freedom purchased by Christ for them, they have also the power of God in them, which keeps them that they break not out licentiously; *the seed of God abides in them, that they cannot sin, as Saint John speaks, 1 John 3.9. that is, they cannot sin after this fashion.*

Thirdly, there is a *spirituall Liberty* (for of this licentiousnesse Christ speaks not in the Text neither,) but a *spirituall Freedom*. it is whereof Christ speaks in this place. And that it may be plain, Christ speaks of a spirituall freedom here, you may plainly perceive it by the words going before: for whereas these Pharisees affirmed they were not in bondage; Christ proves they were, thus: *They were the servants of sin*, saith Christ; and he that is a servant of sin, abides not in the house for ever: as much as to say, the bondage here was such a bondage, as consisted in being under sin; so then, Christ here means a bondage and slavery under sin: the freedom therefore opposit to this, must needs be a spirituall freedom.

Now it will be worth our while to enquire,

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First,

First, into the nature. And secondly, into the quality of this spirituall freedom, that *Christ* brings with him to his own people.

First, for the nature of this freedom. The Philosophers have a rule, that is of very good use for the clearing of Divine truths : *contraries illustrate each other*. Freedom will most clearely, or at least be more clearely apparent unto us, by considering the contrary to freedom ; the contrary to freedom is *bondage*. If we know what the bondage is that *Christ* speaks of, we shall better know what the freedom is.

We will a while consider what bondage *Christ* doth speak of here, to which bondage, he opposeth freedom, as I said before.

The bondage he speaks of, is *bondage under sinne*. Let us briefly consider what this bondage is. The bondage *Christ* speaks of, stands in these two things.

First, an obligation unto, and under the curse of the law, by reason of sin.

And secondly, in the privation of all comfort and contentment, by reason of the same transgression.

First, I say, an obligation unto, and under the curse of the law, by reason of transgressing this Law, that is the first part of bondage under sinne. A person is then properly and truly under bondage, when by reason of his transgression, he can make no escape from under the curse of the Law, but must lie down to it, and be under the torments of it, as a bond-slave, even as a slave in the *Turkeys* galleys ; though this man in his slavery works never so hard, for of that he shall not want, work
enough

enough he shall have, yet, though hee worke never so hard, if at any time he shall chance to slip, or fall, whether it be through omission, or through meer infirmity and weaknesse, and want of strength; all his hard labour is nothing at all considered; but when he doth fail in that insupportable bondage, and task, he hath his stripes and blowes.

This I say, is the true state of bondage, when there is cruelty and rigour, without any regard to the impossibility to goe under the task; the load and blows are laid on with waight; no crying, no promises, no excuses, no pleas though never so reasonable can be heard; but as there is a fault committed, so there must be stripes inflicted: So is it with a person in spirituall bondage. A man is then under the curse of the Law, by reason of his transgression, when doing what he can (suppose as it should be) yet if he fail but in one thing, that that he doth is not regarded nor considered; neither is his ability to doe no more, taken notice of; but still as he doth slip, so the law laies on his stripes.

There are two things mainely to be considered, that doe mightily imbitter the condition of a *bride-man*, who is under the curse of the Law, because of his transgression.

The first is this, the threatenings and menacings of the curse, incessantly falling one upon the necke of another, with loud out-cryes of bitternesse against this soule transgressing. It is with a person in bondage to sin, under the curse of the Law, for time, as it was with *Job* in respect of the afflictions that were upon him; one comes and brings him word, *his Oxen were taken away*; hee had

no sooner done, but another comes and tells him his sheep were lost; and no sooner had he delivered his message, but another comes and tells him his Camels were stoln; and no sooner had hee done, but one comes and tells him his Sons and Daughters were slaine; So one after another the Messengers came thick upon him. Beloved, it is just so with persons in bondage under the Law, The Law comes and threatens this curse, then it comes and threatens a second curse; and no sooner is that ended, but it comes and threatens a third curse, crying out continually, cursed, cursed, cursed, cursed. If the eares of the people were open to heare as much as the Law doth speak, they should heare nothing else but a peale of curses belonging to him that is under the Law: As for instance, a person under the bondage of the Law for sinne, he can heare nothing but this, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the booke of the Law to doe them.* Beloved, there is no person but in some respect or other, every act that hee doth hath some infirmity and failing in it, and in that very regard the Law speaks, *Cursed art thou, for thou hast not continued in all things that are written in the Law to doe them:* Thou canst no sooner pass from this act to another, but as soon as thou dost perform that second act: for the failings in that second act the Law cries, *Cursed, againe, art thou, for thou hast not continued in all things that are written in the booke of the Law, to doe them;* as looke in Rom. 2. there is a continued pealing out of curses of the Law to those that are in bondage under it, *Tribulation, and anguish, and wrath to every*

that doth evil, saving that in *Rom. 3. 9.* the Apostle tells us, this cursednesse, this tribulation and anguish is pronounced by the Law onely upon them that are under it So then it is questionlesse, that to them that are under it, tribulation and anguish, and wrath, and vengeance doe belong.

Now beloved, it is a kind of death, a very torment to be under such continuall menaces, to hear nothing but execrations, to heare nothing but curses and bitternesse, nothing but indignation and wrath; Oh, what a hell is it upon earth, for a soule to receive this sentence! What a bitternesse is it for a malefactor that stands at the Tribunall, to heare a Judge, it may be, making a speech of two houres long to him, onely reciting the extremitie of the torment he shall endure for the crimes he hath committed? Every repetition or addition of torment, denounced and sentenced, is a kind of fiery dart, striking fresh and fresh, to the wounding of the heart: whosoever they are that are under the curse of the Law, by reason of sin; there is no voice speaks or can be heard of them for the loudnesse of that voice, *curfed, curfed, curfed*, every moment, every houre; nothing in the world but curfed. Beloved, let me tell you, this concerns not only persons that live in all manner of licentiousnesse, as drunkennesse, whoredome, the prophanation of the Sabbath in the grossest measure: but that I may speak plainly, this extends in a parallel line with them, to the exactest, strictest, precisest person in their conversation, though the world is not able to say (as men use to say) to them, *black is thine eye*. Nay, though thou seem to be spirituall in all thy

performances; nay, though thou be largely spirituall in them, yet if thou be under the Law, in thy transgression thou shalt hear from the Law, as many curses pronounced against thee, as all the profane wretches under heaven. The grear nesse of thy honesty and uprightnesse, whether in Religion, or in matters of commerce and dealings with men, thy honest conversation, I say, hath the loud peals of *curses* sounding in thy eares. Suppose thou art a man diligently attending the gates of the house of God, given much to prayer and fasting, and to mourning and weeping: Suppose thou art given to great liberality, givest all thy goods to the poore, &c. yet I say, for all this thou mayst be under the curse of the Law, the Law will pick a quarrell in the best of these performances, it will say thus and thus, in this and that thou hast *not continued in all things that are written in the book of the Law to doe them*: concerning this, thou art under the curse of the Law as well as another.

Secondly, there are not onely menacings and threatnings as a fearfull knell in thine eares from the Law, while thou art in bondage under it; but also there is no more with the Law, then a word and a blow; the Lord doth not deal with men in this case, as he deals with his owne people, holding his rod before them to give them warning for an escape; but presently upon the transgression, the threatening is put in execution speedily without mercy, laying on the back of the transgressor, terrifying and racking the soul; Oh the soul that is awakened, that heares the menaces, and feels the scourges of the Law! Oh what torments and an

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guish, what tribulation and bitterness must continually affright it ! This I say is the commission of the Law, to spare neither high nor low, rich nor poor; nay, I will goe further, holy, nor unholy, in respect of the practise of holines, can exempt himselfe from the curse of it. It is true beloved, as the Apostle saith, the Law speaks *life*; *Doe this and live*: But poore comfort it is, because it first requires such doings that are impossible to be attained; just as if a man should be condemned to die at a barre, with this promise; Take all *England* and remove it upon thy shoulders into the West-Indies, and then thou shalt be saved from this death: The Judge had as good say nothing, for the thing is impossible to be done: the law indeed doth say, *Doe this and live*; but where is the man that can doe it, by continuing in all things without failing in one tittle thereof? He that continueth in the whole Law, and *fails but in one point, is guilty of all*: Therefore till you come to that perfection of fulfilling of the Law, that you fail not in one tittle, never dream of the life that the Law holdeth out to you; If you have failed in one point, all you have done is ravelled out unto the end againe, all your labour is lost, you are as much under the curse as if you had done nothing at all.

Yet further beloved, the bondage under the Law doth not onely stand in the cursings of the Law, and in the presence of all evill thereby; but also in the *privation of all comfort*, that persons might have under this torment; I say, a privation of *all comfort*; for there is not a word, not a tittle of comfort for the refreshment of a person under the

Law, not a tittle of comfort in all the Law, from the first to the last. It is true, there was comfort intermingled in the promulgation of the Law, but the comfort is not in the Law properly so considered, as it contains in it a curse to the disobedient, there is no comfort beloved, to any person that is under it, in respect of the curse of it; I say, the Law is to such persons (as *Micaiah* was to *Ahab*) never speaking a word of good to them. But this is not all, for though the Law be never so rigid of it selfe, if it would allow and suffer others to speak a word of comfort, there were some good thing in it; but the Law keeps under and shuts up, that there cannot be a word of comfort heard from any other, *Gal. 3. 23.* there you shall finde that the Law is not only a terror of it selfe to those that are under it, but it is also a most strict, rigid, severe keeper, that there cannot come in the least glimmerings of light, and comfort elsewhere: For (saith the Apostle there, of persons being under the Law) they are shut up unto, or untill the faith; for the Apostle calls the Law a *Schoolmaster* untill *Christ*, so that *Christ* himself hath not a word of comfort for them while they are under the Law: When *Christ* speaks any thing, presently saith the Law, this is not to you, this is for others that are exempted from my government, from my dominion; there is nothing of all this for you, you have nothing to do with it. I say, this is the condition of persons that are kept under this bitternesse of the Law, that as they transgress the curse of the Law is their prison. Persons kept in this estate, how doe they put off the comforts of *Christ* from them? There is none of them belongs

belongs to me, saith such a soule; I have sinned and all the judgments of Christ are pronounced against me, I must die. So long as you continue, in this estate, the curses of the law are as frequently pronounced against you, as there are transgressions in you; there would not be one comfort of Jesus Christ to give refreshment to your spirits but so long as you still remaine in this estate; that you will conclude you are under the curse, because of your transgressions, you will forsake all the mercies of the Gospell. This is then to be in bondage under the Law; namely, for a person so to have the Law to tyrannize and domineere over him, as to make him believe that as often as he doth transgresse, hee must expect sentence of the curse of the Law to bee fulfilled upon him.

Thirdly, they that are in bondage under the Law because of sinne, as they are subject to this misery, in respect of the privation of comfort; so the Law, it is true, askes work enough, more then any man under heaven can now performe; but will provide nothing in the World, wherewith to have things done: it requires the *full tale of brick*, but it gives *no straw*; it puts into no way where help may be had, it suffers no help to come in. Let me tell you, you that are under the *curse of the Law*, that is, have still the Law telling you, that as you doe faile, so you must have the curse; you shall find that when you doe the will of God, the Law will exact *the whole*, the utmost *tale of Brick of you*, and the Law will give you no help at all, though never so weak, though never so unable:

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Get it as you can, doe what you will, when the day is done, the Law requires that there be not a brick short of what is required : if you faile the least that can be in it, it is no matter, able or not able, you must have the lash, as well as those that have the greatest abilities in the world. It is a hard condition, I have opened it the more largely, that you may the better see the glory and happinesse of that freedom and liberty Christ hath purchased for his people.

I will in a word give you a touch, who the persons are that are in this bondage; and then I will come to set forth the freedom it self, and I hope, it will not be tedious to hear of the freedom, when you have heard of the extreme bitterness of this bondage.

Quest. Who are under this bondage?

Ans. I answer as I said before, who ever you are, that will apply still to your selves, and have no power, but must apply to your selves, the sentence and curse of the Law, because of transgression; you that will be still arguing and pleading, if I transgresse, it is but justice, and I must expect, I must accept, I must feel the smart of the rod; I say, you that will still maintain and establish the curse as a necessary attendant upon transgression and disobedience, and take this to be your condition, and your portion, you are the men that are under the Law, that are under the curse of it: I know, beloved, although you may thinke to winde your selves out of the extremity of the curse, or from the rod of the Law, by your strictnes & exactnes, & growing up to perfection in your obedience; yet al your perfection

fection of obedience shal not be able to except you from the lash, till you have attained to such perfection, that hath not one jot or tittle of failing and aberration at all. For if you faile in one tittle, you are gone for ever. For the law, as it attends great faults, so it attends little failings too, & if you give the law power over you, when you commit great sins, the Law will take power to it self, to whip, to curse you for small sins too. I will come to discover what the *freedom* is from the bondage Christ speaks of here; I say, this freedom is from all this bondage under sinne and the law. First, Christ doth exempt men and discharge them, and acquit them from all the menaces, and all the threatnings, and all the bitter language that the Law doth pronounce against the transgressors of it: Marke well what I say, beloved, every person *made free by Christ*, hee is freed and exempted, that the Law cannot, must not pronounce one curse against him: There is not one of all the curses in the law, doth belong to such a person that is made *free by Christ*; this seems strange beloved, That the law should not dare to pronounce the curse, where sin is committed: but not so strange as true. The freemen of *Christ*, when they doe transgresse the Law, as in all things they doe sin, yet when they doe sin, there is no *curse*, no menaces, no threatnings of the Law to be executed upon them. Should I come to instance, peradventure I should give offence to some; I would not willingly give offence to any; but the truth, as it is in Jesus, must not be concealed for feare of the choler of those that are enemies unto Christ: let mee therefore tell you beloved, suppose a member
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of *Christ*, a free man of *Christ* should happen to fall, not only by a failing or a slip; but also by a grosse failing, a heavy failing; nay, a scandalous failing into sin; *Christ* making a person free doth disanull, frustrate and make void every curse and sentence that is in the Law, that is against such a transgressor; that this member of *Christ* is no more under the curse when he hath transgressed, then he was before he transgressed. Thus I say, *Christ* hath conveyed him beyond the reach of the curse, it concerns him no more then if he had not transgressed. For the illustration of this, I beseech you to consider this one thing, it is familiar to you, & the case is the same with *Christ's* freemen. Suppose there are two men equally guilty of *felony* and *murder*, both of them come to their arraignment; one of them to have his discharge or pardon from the King: The King having received satisfaction in the behalfe of that person, the other hath received no discharge at all, the Iudge goes on to pronounce the sentence according to the Law; *Thou shalt goe from hence to the place from whence thou camest, and from thence to the place of execution, there to be hanged*: Now mark, these are two men equall in transgression, and therefore in themselves equall, deserving the same sentence of Execution. Now when the Iudge doth pronounce the justice of the Law upon the one transgressor, he hath not his discharge, he lies under the sentence; but the other hath his discharge, and therefore the Iudge speaks not a word of this sentence to him: I say againe, the Iudge dares not speak a word of this sentence to him: And when the man that is pardoned heares the

the sentence, he may heare it as the doome of his fellow, but hee heares nothing of it concerning himself: So it is with the *free-man of Christ*, hee may fall into the same sinne that a reprobate falls into (as *Noah* was once drunk, *David* did once commit adultery and murder) but as this man is the *free-man of Christ*, the curse cannot attach him; though the Law say to the reprobate person, that hath not freedome by Christ, *thou shalt certainly bee damned for this*: Yet the Law cannot say one word of this to the person that is a freeman, though hee commit the same fault, and be guilty of the same punishment, and the ground of all this is, that Christ hath made him free from it. Therefore let me tell you in a word; if you be *free men of Christ*, you may esteem all the curses of the Law, as no more concerning you, then the lawes of *England* doe concerne *Spain*, or the laws of *Turkie* an *English* man, with whom they have nothing to doe. I doe not say the law is absolutely abolished, but it is abolished in respect of the curse of it; to every person that is a freeman of Christ: So though such a man do sin, the law hath no more to say to him, then if hee had not sinned: Beloved, *Christ is a sanctuary*, he is a priviledged place to every one of his *free men*: The law is not able, or rather it is disabled from serving a writ *ad capiendum*, upon the person that is walking in Christ, and keeps himself within those bounds: *Hee that continues in my word is my Disciple, and the truth shall make him free*: If you abide in Christ, and keep in Christ, no Sergeant of the law dares come in to serve a writ, no accusation of the law can come in against you: looke

Look what the Apostle saith, *Rom. 8.* in the latter end, triumphing, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect?* saith he, *it is God that justifieth; who shall condemne? it is Christ which is dead, nay rather which is risen again.* Mark well I pray you, Paul doth not say, that the Elect doe never transgresse, hee doth confesse that there is transgression, but that he triumphs in is, that though they doe transgresse, there is nothing to be laid to their charge, no curse can come against them, no curse can be executed upon them, there is no clapping them in gaole for their transgression.

Secondly, the *free man of Christ*, as he is exempted from the curse and rod of the Law, that is become a muzzle-chapt dog, hee may passe and repasse without the least snap, without the least bite of this dog; yea though he doe fall, yet the dog cannot come at him to hurt him: So in the second place, the freeman of Christ is let loose to enjoy the *free spirit*, as David calls it, *Psal. 51.* or the *comforting spirit*, as Christ calls it, *John 14. 26.* I say, this freedom consists in this, to have free society, and free discourse with this *free spirit of God*; so that the *free man of Christ* may hear all the gracious language provided in the rich thoughts of God for him, he may heare, and that with application to himselfe, that his iniquities are blotted out as a cloud, that God will remember his sins no more, that they are cast into the bottom of the sea, that they are laid all upon Christ, that the Lamb of God took them all away, that the blood of Christ cleanseth him from all his sinnes. It is a marvelous freedom indeed to have this participation of communion with this *free spirit of Christ*, to heare such com-

comfortable language, to raise up a drooping spirit, to satisfie a languishing soule.

Thirdly, the *free man of Christ* hath this freedom, that Christ doth all his work for him, as well as in him. He that is in bondage under the Law, as I told you before, must doe every thing himself, and that he doth he must doe perfectly; that is an insupportable thing, and heauey bondage, for a man to have more laid upon him then his strength is able to beare: the free man of Christ, considering that he is weak, poor, and unable to worke, Christ doth all his worke for him, *Isa. 26. 12.* the holy Ghost tells us, *hee hath done all our works in us*; and in the margin the words are rendred, *he hath done all our works for us.* But beloved, look into *Rom. 5. 19.* you shall plainly see this freedome of the free men of Christ, that they stand righteous in the face of God, by that which Christ hath done for them, Christ hath so wrought for them, that they are as righteous, as if they had done all in their own persons: *As by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many are made righteous.* Look here, and you shall see that Christ doth all the worke for his free men, that they should doe themselves: as if a man were commanded to bring in a thousand of bricks by such a day, or else to haue the strapadoe; another man brings in all his bricks for him, while he doth not one for himself: that the other man doth for him, is accepted as a full tale, even for this man, though he doth nothing himself: even so it is with the free men of Christ, Christ doth all for them that God requires of them to be done; and the righteousness of Christ stands

in that manner theirs, as if they had done it themselves; For by the obedience of one many are made righteous, not by the obedience in their own persons, but by the obedience of one man Christ, even by the obedience of Christ alone, we stand thus righteous before God.

Obj. But some will say, by this it seems we take away all endeavours and employment from believers, the free men of Christ. Doth Christ doe every thing for them? Do they stand righteous before God, in respect of what Christ hath done for them? Then they may sit still, they may doe what they list.

Ans. For answer to this, Will you deny this that we are righteous with God, and that we are righteous with God, by the righteousness of Christ, or is it by our own righteousness? Then mark what the Apostle saith, *Romans 10. 3.* They (saith the Apostle) speaking of the Jewes, going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God, by Christ, saith he there, *is the end of the Law for righteousness, to every one that believeth: Either you must disclaim Christs righteousness, or you must claim your own; for if the gift of God bee of grace, then it is not of works, else works are no more works: and if it be of works, it is no more of grace, otherwise grace is no more grace, Rom. 11. 6.*

Obj. But you will say further to me, (for example a man be a meer Papist, I am sure, he cannot doe but that the righteousness by which I stand righteous before God, is the righteousness Christ doe for me, and not that I can doe for my selfe)

wil ask me, I say, doth not this take men off from all manner of *obedience*, and all manner of *holinesse*?

Answe. I answer, and thus much I say, it takes them off from those ends which they aime at in their obedience; namely, the end for which *Christ*s obedience served for; as much as to say, our standing righteous by what *Christ* hath done for us, concerns us in point of justification, and in point of consolation, and in the businesse of salvation; we have our justification, we have our peace, we have our salvation only by the righteousness *Christ* hath done for us: but this doth not take away our obedience; nor our services in respect of those ends for which such services are now required of believers: We have yet severall ends for duties and obedience, namely, that our services may glorifie God, and evidence our thankfulness, and that they may be profitable to men, that they may be ordinances wherein to meet with God, to make good what he hath promised; so far we are called out to services, and walking uprightly, sincerely, exactly, and strictly according to the good pleasure of God; and in regard of such ends of services, there is a gracious freedome that the free-man of *Christ* have by *Christ*, that is, so far forth as services and obediences are expected at the free-mans hand, for the ends that I have named, there is *Christ* by his spirit present with the persons that are *free-men*, to help them in all such kind of services; so that they become strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, to do the Will of God. Mark what the Apostle speaks, *I am able to doe all things through Christ that strengthens me*: Of my selfe, saith he, I

am able to doe nothing ; but with Christ , and through Christ that strengthens me , I am able to doe all things. He that is Christs freeman hath alwaies the strength of Christ present, answerable to that weight and burthen of employment God calls him forth unto ; *My grace,saith Christ , shall be sufficient for thee , and my strength shall be made perfect in weaknesse* : Beloved , as you are the freemen of Christ,you may confidently rest upon it,that Christ *will never faile you, nor forsake you*, when he calls you forth into employments : But you that are under the Law , there is much required of you and imposed upon you, but no help to be expected ; you must doe by your own strength : The whole tale of brick shall be exacted of you, but no straw shall be given unto you : but you that are free men of Christ,he will help you,he will oyle your wheeles, and fill your sailes , and *carry you upon Eagles wings, that you shall run and not be weary, walke and not faint*. So then the free men of Christ having Christ and his Spirit for their life and strength , they may goe infinitely beyond the exactest legalist in the world, in more cheerfull obedience then they can performe. He that walks in his owne strength can never steer his businesse so well and so quickly, as he that hath the arms, the strength , and the principles of the great God of Heaven and earth ; as he that hath this great supporter , this wise director, this mighty assister to be continually by him : Beloved,there is no burthen you shall beare, but by this freedom you have, he will put his own shoulder to it,to beare it up.

It is wonderfull to consider that Christ should
groan

groane under the burden laid upon him by his Father, when he cried out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And yet *Paul* and *Silas* should sing for joy, when their bodies were covered with goare blood by reason of stripes: How comes this to passe? was *Paul* stronger then *Christ*? If not, why was *Paul* so joyfull and *Christ* so sad? Beloved, God withdrew himself from *Christ*, and therefore *Christ* saith, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* But the strength of *Christ* was present with *Paul*, that this very imprisonment was a palace and recreation to him; *Christ* bare all the burdens for him: Oh were you but the free-men of *Christ*, and did you but know it, every affliction would be but a flea-biting: for *Christ* would bear all your duties and your burthens for you, he would stand under the greatest weight that can be laid upon you, and bear it off your backs; the greatest burthen should never make you stoop, because there is a sufficient strength to bear it up. There may bee a heavie burthen laid upon the back of a child, and yet the child with ease may goe under it, because there is a greater strength that bears it up, it doth not lie upon the child: so long as *Christ* bears up your weight, it shall be easie to you. You know there is a ceremony in use amongst us, for men to carry the corps of their friends to the grave, for fashion sake they go under the corps, but there are Bearers appointed that bear all the weight upon their shoulders: So *Christ* bears all for his free-men; and this is the freedom men have by *Christ*, that if they are to bear any burthens, *Christ* comes and bears all for them.

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and they goe as easily under them, as if they had no burthen upon them at all.

You shall find the free-men of Christ, that they have also the constant attendance of the free spirit of Christ continually waiting upon them : when Christ hath made any man free, he sends his Spirit from heaven, first to acquaint the soule with all that he hath done for him; and hath not sent him to bring good newes, and to be gone againe; but after the good newes is brought, he waits and attends upon this free-man in all his journeys, and travells to those mansions that Christ hath prepared for him; that so in the way, if the soul should faint, that would refresh him with the water of life, to fetch the spirit of this fainter againe, and in case the soule grow weake and failes, the spirit attends to administer cordials to revive, and to renew the strength of this man againe that thus faile; and in case the soul grow weary, the spirit is sent to take up the soul into his arms, into his bosome; in case the way is tedious, the spirit is sent to take off the tediousnesse of the way with sweet discourse, telling him, what things are laid up in fulnesse of pleasures and glory, telling him what a welcome there will be at his comming home; when there are many by-ways in his way, that there may be no going out of the way, hee will direct him and lead him by the hand, and never leave him till the Spirit of the Lord hath delivered him up into the hands of Christ, and carried him unto mansions in glory.

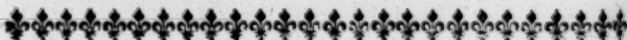
In a word of that; who these free-men of Christ are; no man knows them, but onely those persons that co

that Christ takes out of bondage; time will not give me leave to be large here. Would you have any means, how you may come to be the free-men of Christ? know this, that there is no consideration in the businesse of Christ, for the making of a person free, but only their bondage, in which they are; The sum is this beloved in brief, Christ doth not look that you should come forth, and meet with him, and mediate or intercede, or beg, or bring a price in your hands, that you may be his free-men; but he looks upon persons as they are bound up, as they are helpelesse, as they are unable to will or do any thing, and for his own compassions sake, hee takes up those persons when they little dream or think they ever shall be set at liberty.

But you will say, all shall not be freed that are in bondage; How shall I then know that I am one of the number of Christs free-men?

Ans. I answer, he that beleeveth shall be saved. If the Lord give but to thy spirit now truly to beleeve, thou art the very man for whom Christ was sent to proclaim liberty; I say, if thou canst beleeve, and roule thy self upon Christ, cleave to Christ, and say, I will not let thee goe, this is security enough, Christ was sent to deliver thee: Hee that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast him out. I beseech you beloved, consider (The Lord God in the abundant riches of his grace, give closing spirits to some of you at this time:) You think there must be a great deale of pains by your endeavours, and on your parts to have this freedom: but Christ doth not look for your pains; Christ came to save those that could not tell which way to turn themselves.

















And if the Scripture be true, as most certainly it is, if thou beleevest he is thine, if thou beleeve with all thy heart, thy sinnes are forgiven thee (though the very believing it self, doth not incoffe you into this freedome,) but if you would know whether you have any part in this freedome or not, the believing in the *Lord Christ* is a sufficient manifestation. Doe but catch hold of him, to have thy deliverance by him, he shall forsake himself, and deny his truth, if he cast or throw thee off.



SERMON IX.

Mens own Righteousnesse their Grand Idoll.

Rom. 10. 3. *For they being ignorant of Gods righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.*





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 ped but narrowly; they use to se
 up sea markes as cautions or warnings to such
 shall come after, that by other mens harmes they
 may learn to be wary: It is the Apostles ver
 practice in this place; In the former part of the
Epist

Epistle, and especially in the ninth Chapter, he mightily contends for the free 'grace of God unto peace, life, and salvation without workes; The children being yet unborn, and having done neither good nor evill, but that the purpose of God might stand according to election, not of workes but of grace; it was said, *Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated. He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens: I say, this is the main doctrine that the Apostle preacheth, from the beginning of this Epistle to the closure of the ninth Chapter.*

Then he comes upon the Jewes with an argument to their reproach: *The Gentiles that followed not after Righteousnesse, have attained unto Righteousnesse, when they themselves that did follow after Righteousnesse could not attaine it: And the Apostle gives the reason why they that prest so hard after it could not attaine it: because they sought it not by Faith, but as it were, by the workes of the Law: Why, what hurt was there in that, will some say? The Apostle answereth that hereby they stumbled at that stumbling block, as it is written, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone, and a Rock of offence: This it 'seemes was the Rock of offence; they would have their righteousness set up to doe them good, and this they sought as it were by the workes of the Law.*

But some men might thinke that the Apostle had a bitterness of spirit, or some malice against his own brethren, and that this was but the fruit of that bitterness; Therefore in the beginning of this Chapter, he cleares himselfe from any such base ends in this ministry: For his part hee wishes with all his heart, it may be well with them;

My hearts desire and prayer for Israel is, that they may be saved ; Nay , so farre as he may speake well of them , and the most he can speake he will ; and he will not conceal any thing : In the second verse he doth confesse , nay , he doth beare witnesse to it , That they had a zeale according to God ; but yet he must not dissemble , he must deale friendly , though never so plainly ; though they had a zeale according to God , yet it was not according to knowledge .

And because he had taxed them with ignorance here in the Text , he discovers what this ignorance of theirs was ; and what the fearefull and desperate fruit of this ignorance were ; that whereof they were ignorant , was of Gods Righteousnesse , being ignorant of the righteousness of God ; the fruit of it is twofold , both very bitter , the one immediatly issuing from the other .

1. This ignorance of Gods righteousness put them upon a fearfull mistake , *They goe about , upon this , to establish their own righteousness .*

2. And that mistake put them upon another as bad as that , if not worle ; therefore they submitted not to the righteousness of God . The proposition the words afford to us , is briefly this (for we will sum up the whole verse into one head , which is this) namely ,

That the ignorance of Gods righteousness puts men upon these two dangerous mischiefs , an establishing of their own righteousness , and the not submitting themselves to the righteousness of God .

Men that will establish their own righteousness , they will not submit to the righteousness of God , while they are ignorant of the righteousness of God :

God : Beloved, they were not so easily misled , as we are apt to follow them, having gone before us ; we are like sheep leaping without looking , if any leap before us. *It hath been the Rock of offence*, a stumbling stone from the beginning to this day , and will be to the end of the world ; there will be an establishing of our own righteousness without submitting to the righteousness of God, while there is an ignorance of this righteousness.

Now that we may take warning , and so escape the danger, that they have felt the smart of already, it will be requisite we take into consideration.

First, what this righteousness of theirs and ours is, that they did, & we are apt to go about to establish.

Secondly, what it is to go about to establish this our righteousness.

Thirdly, what this righteousness of God is that they did not submit unto.

Fourthly, what it is, not to submit unto this righteousness of God.

Fifthly, what this ignorance is from whence both these fearfull evils issue , the establishing of our owne righteousness , and not submitting to the righteousness of God.

And lastly, what the issue in the end will prove. Of these, or as many of these as the time will permit in their severall orders.

To begin with the first, *What is the righteousness of theirs and ours , that the Apostle complains of, that being established is a rock of offence ?*

I am not ignorant beloved, that the eyes of some persons are only , or moſt upon a righteousness of mans own devising & contriving, such a righteousness

ousnes as never came into Gods thoughts, a righteousness according to the precepts and traditions of men, such a righteousness as our Saviour in *Mat. 15. 9.* taxeth the Pharisees withall, who taught for doctrines the traditions of men; and by their owne traditions, as much as in them lay, made voyd the Commandements of God. This kind of righteousness in our time proceeds from the presumption of men, that dare put any thing of their own, without warrant and commission from God, into the worship and service of God; charging things upon men as duties of Religion, that God binds not men unto. For my own part beloved, I am cleare of the mind that this kind of righteousness is farre from the righteousness of God the Apostle here speaks of, and the highest presumption that a man can possibly take upon himselfe, to set himselfe so in the place of God, as not only not to command from him, but also to command without and against him. Law-givers hold themselves then most disparaged and contemned, when any inferior will take upon him to make Lawes without them, or against them: It will lie heavy when it shall once come to an account, not only upon the actors, but also upon those that may be the redressors, if this kind of righteousness established by some be not brought down, and laid in the dust.

But under favour beloved, I conceive that the Apostle aymes at a more sublime righteousness, then the righteousness in the precepts of men, he speaks of such a righteousness, which some it may be are too forward to establish, who yet abhorre to establish the other we have now spoken of.

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The righteousness the Apostle complains of being established, is not the righteousness of mans making, but a righteousness of Gods owne making, a righteousness according to Gods owne will; I mean a righteousness consisting in obedience to the things that God himself hath commanded unto men; a righteousness which is *a walking in all the Commandments of God*, though it be in a way of blamelesnesse; this very righteousness I say, is that righteousness, which being established, proves a stumbling stone, and a rock of offence to all that shall establish it.

This may seem harsh beloved, at first, but I shall make it cleer to you from the Apostles own interpretation of himself, who best knew his own mind; That this is the righteousness hee here speaks of, mark but the words immediately following the text, in verse 4. of this 10 chap. *For*, saith he there, *Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that beleeveth*; To what purpose doth hee bring this passage, that *Christ is the end of the Law*: but that by these words he might confute their vanitie, who thinke to establish their owne righteousness in the fulfilling of the Law? As if hee should say, you think by your keeping of the Law, by your righteousness you performe, you can attain to the end of the Law, that so you may obtaine the grace and goodnesse of the Lord; but it is in vaine, it is not you that can reach the end of the Law; neither doth God aym at it, that you should reach the end of the Law, but he hath constituted and ordained *Christ to be the end of the Law*. Therefore the righteousness of God must be the righteousness of Christ; the

the righteousness that God aims at is a perfect righteousness, a righteousness that reaches to the very end of the Law, your righteousness can never reach to the end of the Law, it is Christ alone that doth it. And yet again in ver 4. the Apostle clears more fully, what hee meanes by our righteousness: for there he begins to make the distinction between our righteousness and the righteousness of God, explaining what they both are, *Moses* saith hee, *describing the righteousness of the law*, saith thus, (that which he calls our own righteousness in the 4. vers. from *Moses*, he calls it the righteousness of the law) *he that doth these things, shall even live in them*: And if you will look into *Lev. 18. 5.* you shall there see what the righteousness of the Law is, which the Apostle speaks of in this place; and if you observe but the margin of your Bible, you shall find this very text is wisely referred to that of *Leviticus*, *You shall keep my statutes, and doe my judgments; which if a man doe, he shall even live in them*: See the Apostle makes use of the very phrase, hee that doth them, shall live through them, and in them; It is the righteousness of the law, saith the Apostle, it is the keeping of Gods statutes, and doing of Gods judgments, saith *Moses*. By this, beloved, you may see what righteousness it is, that the Lord by the Apostle speaks of, a righteousness that consists in doing the statutes and judgments of the Lord.

And if you will but consider, *Luk 18. 11. 12.* the condition of the *Pharisee* Christ speaks of, who went up into the Temple to pray as the *Publican* did; in him you shall see, I say, and easily perceive what the righteousness was, that they went about

about to establish; For there the *Pharise* doth justify himselfe in respect of many particular branches of the Law, I thank thee saith the *Pharise*, *I am not as other men are, an extortioner, unjust, an adulterer, nor as this Publican: I fast twice in the week, I pay Tithes of all that I possesse*: Marke it well I pray, see what it is that he pleads for, as that which must prevaile with God for good to him; it is his owne righteousness; and what righteousness is that? It is a righteousness according to the Law, it is a righteousness of piety, a righteousness of justice, I fast twice in the week, I am no extortioner, nor unjust person, nor adulterer, &c. Now heare Christs answer concerning this *Pharise*, you shall see what Christ thinks of this righteousness the *Pharise* speaks of, *The Publican went away rather justified then he*, saith the text: and the reason is, because he did goe in the strength of this righteousness of his, to speed with God, his expectation was from his righteousness; It was not a righteousness of his owne devising and contriving; but a righteousness according to Gods Law.

If you look further into the third to the *Philippians*, you shall find the Apostle speaks fully to the case in hand, instancing in himself in the 5, 6, 7 vers. where he gives an account of his estate, in which he was before the time of his conversion. First, he saith, *Hee had a zeale for God*, and that zeale put him on so hot, that he did persecute the Church of God, meerly out of ignorance; for saith he of himself, *I did it ignorantly: and concerning the righteousness of the law, saith he, I was blameles*, marke that passage well, *all this was before conversion, concerning the righteousness of*

the Law, he was blamelesse; afterwards hee tells us, this was in the time of his ignorance, wherein he made full account that this righteousness of his was his *Gain*, but afterwards, saith hee, *what was gain to me, I accounted losse, yea, and I suffer the losse of all things, that I may be found in Christ, not having mine owne righteousness, which is by the law.* By all these passages, I say, put together, wherein the Apostle doth so fully expound himself, it doth plainly appeare, that the righteousness of the Law, the establishing whereof, the Apostle here taxeth, as a dangerous mistake, and a fruit of ignorance; the righteousness, I say, is that righteousness wherein men walk according to Gods owne Law blamelessely.

I am not ignorant beloved, how this assertion goeth under the foule blurre of *Antinomianisme*, that the blamelesse walking according to the Law being established, is a fruit of ignorance, and a cause of mens not submitting to the righteousness of God: and no marvell it doth goe for such now; for in the Apostles time it was accounted so: nay, it was objected against the Apostle himself, as direct *Antinomianisme*; And therefore he was enforced to vindicate himself thus, *Doe we make void the Law, saith the Apostle, through faith? God forbid: He takes away the objection they put to him, upon his establishing of Gods righteousness, and his overthrowing our righteousness.* It was objected, that thereby he went about to make void the Law, and therefore it is no marvell it holds still as an objection, that the maintaining of this principle is the overthrowing of the Law. But beloved, I must

must say to you as the Apostle did in the same case, *God forbid, nay rather it doth establish the Law,* that is to say, in its right place. It doth take men off from performing duties to corrupt ends, and from the bad uses they are apt to make of *idolizing* their own righteousness. And therefore the Apostle doth not condemne the use of the Law, and our righteousness simply : that which he speaks against here, is the establishing of our righteousness ; Our owne righteousness is good in its kind, and for its own proper uses ; but then it proves a fruit of *sin*, ignorance, and a dangerous stumbling-block, and an *Idol*, when we goe about to establish this righteousness of ours.

I come therefore to the second thing, which is to cleare this truth more fully, namely, *what it is to establish this righteousness ?* Or what establishing the Apostle doth drive at in this place.

For the clearing of which, the *Antithesis*, or the opposition that the Apostle sets, will give you a great deal of light to understand his meaning and purpose here, by *going about to establish their owne Righteousnesse, and not submitting to the Righteousnesse of God.* He speaks here therefore of such an establishing of our righteousness according to the Law, as to bring it into the roome, and stead, or place of Gods righteousness : It is such an establishing of our own righteousness, as that for it we cannot nor will not admit, that the righteousness of God should doe its office. So farre forth then as any righteousness of ours encroaches upon the *priviledges and prerogatives* of the righteousness of God, so that the righteousness of God cannot doe its own work,

work, or at least wise must be Circumscribed in doing its own work by this righteousness; so far is there an establishing of our own righteousness, which is a fruit of ignorance, and is a stumbling-block, and a rock of offence.

It will be worth the while therefore to consider, when our righteousness is said truly to be established in the room and stead of the righteousness of God. This will be cleared by the consideration of the main scope and drift of men, in the performing of the righteousness which they do establish. When men doe put that upon their own righteousness, which should have been put upon Gods only; when men make their own righteousness the sanctuary and refuge that Gods righteousness only should be; then our righteousness is set up as a *grand Idoll*, and established in the room and place of Gods righteousness. To cleare the case to you by some particular instances: it is a thing of great importance, as at all times, so now at this time of eminent danger, the Sword being over our heads, and over the whole Nation (the Lord having revealed to the spirits of men by his truth, that in case of eminent danger, there should be a great deal of zeale to God) that the people of God should be put mightily on, to deal with God in this present extremity and necessity. But, beloved, I am afraid, many have a zeal to God in this very case, but yet not according to knowledge, so that too many ignorantly and zealously, I confesse; yet I say, too many in this zeale to God, for their own safety and security, too much establish *their own righteousness*: And I fear me, if there be

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mifcarriage after fo many fasting dayes, and fo much praying, and seeking God; it will be the fruit of the eftablifhing of our own righteousnes, in the room and place of the righteousnes of God. As for example, when fin abounds whether perfonally, or generally, What is the way to get off, or get out of fuch transgression? Beloved, I appeale to your own fpirits, you that are fpirituall, is not this your end you propound? To faft it out, and to pray it out, and to mourn it out: this is that which muft bring you a difcharge of your fins, this is that which muft bring you tydings, that God will be pacified towards you, that God will turn away his anger from you; if you doe but faft fpirituallly, if you can but mourn bitterly, if you can but pray zealoufly with ftrength of fpirit, that is that that fhall overcome God.

I afke beloved, or I befeech you rather afk your own fpirits, I mean ftill, you that are fpirituall: Do not your hearts run out continually this way? Do they. or doe they not? What then meaneth all the complaints of yours upon the defects of your faftings, and from the defect of your humiliation, and felf-deniall, and the fubduing of your corruptions? That this is that which pulls down the wrath of God upon us. Is not this common among us, As long as men do not mend, there is no hope that God will mend; and if every man would mend one, this is the way to redrefle the evill of the times? Beloved, let me deal plainly and freely with you: they that doe put deliverance from fin and wrath upon the fpirituall performance of that righteousneffe, which the Law doth command

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of them, they doe put that righteousness in the room and place of the righteousness of God, they doe make it as great an Idoll as can be, for they doe make that righteousness to be that, which Gods righteousness only is. I speak not beloved against the doing of any righteousness according to the will of God revealed, let that mouth be for ever stopped that shall be opened to blame the Law that is holy, just and good, or shall be a means to discourage people from walking in the Commandements of God blamelesse.

All that I speak is this: that it will prove a rock of offence in the end, if it be not turned from, namely, that we should expect that our owne righteousness should bring downe a gracious answer from God to our spirits, that when we have done our worke, our righteousness in effect must prove our Mediator and Messenger from God, and as our righteousness will speak, so will we have peace, or remaine in bitterness of spirit: what can the righteousness of God himself do more then this, to have power with God, to prevail over God for good to us? Beloved, although some peradventure may magnifie performances done in a spirituall way, with attributes and titles even of Gods owne peculiar; I mean with attributes of *omnipotency* and *invincibility*; certainly there is no omnipotency but in God himself, and the righteousness that is Gods own: The best righteousness that ever any man could act, or perform in all his life, is not able to divert the least of sins or wrath, or procure or obtain the least smile of favour from God. You know beloved, That God is a God of pure eyes, and

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cannot behold iniquity : You know that iniquity is that which separates between God and a people. Now what is the perfectest righteousness which the best man upon earth doth performe, is it not full of unrighteousnesse and iniquity ? *All our righteousnesses*, saith the Prophet *Isaiah*, are but as filthy ragges; and saith the Apostle, *I account all as dung, even my righteousnesses, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness* : Is there dung and filth in the best of mans righteousness, and can this righteousness have power with God, and prevaile over him ?

Look upon Christ himself, when hee did beare the sins of many upon his owne person, Christ himself was deserted and forsaken of God, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee* ? Is Christ forsaken when the sinnes of men are upon him, and shall mens persons be accepted and received in respect of such an act of theirs that carries sinfulness in the face of it ; Nay, that carries an universal leprosie in the nature of it ? Suppose your righteousness were a fulfilling of the whole law of God, if you faile but in one point, that very failing in one point, makes you guilty of the breach of all the rest, and when men stand guilty before God, shall they plead that which is full of guilt, to procure favour, mercy, or grace from him ? No, no, the sacrifice of God which is accepted of him, must be a male lambe, and a *Lambe without blemish* : till therefore you can purge your righteousness, and separate all iniquity from your righteousness, know that all your righteousness in its owne nature doth but separate you from God, so farre

is your righteousness from prevailing with him

Obj. Surely, will some say, the righteousness that is performed according to the will of God doth please him, and doth move and melt him, and prevaile with him to doe this and that good to his people.

Ans. I answer beloved, too many people in the world doe too much stint the will of God, so much spoken of, when they speak of a Righteousnes according to the *will of God*, or a righteousness to doe the *will of God*, what is it? It is true indeed, righteousness done according to the will of God doth infinitely prevaile with God: But shew me the man that can performe this righteousness, a meer man without *Christ*? Shew me a man that ever did, or ever can doe this, acting righteousness according to the will of God? Of my self saith *Paul*, I can doe nothing, *Without me*, saith *Christ*, *can yee doe nothing*; Nay, he goes further, *how to perform that which is good, I find not*, Rom. 7. 18. Whilst that men conceive that the will of God consists onely in the materialls of righteousness; peradventure they may think their righteousness is according to the will of God: but alas, the materialls of righteousness, are but the least part of the will of God, wherewith he is pleased: Now to doe an act partly with the will of God, and partly against the will of God, is this to doe an act according to the will of God? To doe something that God calls for at your hands in some things, and to walke directly contrary to him in other things: is this to doe his will? Suppose that for the matter the righteousness you doe, be according to the will of God, that
you

you doe the thing that God calls for of you , as for instance, you fast and pray, and the like; doe you think you doe these things according to the will of God, because the outward act is done? Beloved, the will of God extends to the manner of doing, to the disposition of the person that is to doe, as well as to the matter : As in *Esa. 1.* were not *new-Moons and Sabbaths, and solemn Assemblies* Gods own ordinances? And was not the performance of them materially according to the will of God? Yet nevertheless, the soule of God did loath this service of righteousness, he was weary of it he could not bear it, there was sinfulness mixed with it, *your hands are full of blood*, saith the Lord; and therefore though the thing were materially according to his will, yet his soul abhorred the thing being done amisse.

Suppose men go further then simply doing things according to the will of God materially, They doe not onely the things, but doe them spiritually, with enlargednesse of heart and affection, you fast, and you fast with bitterness of spirit, you eat bitter hearbs in fasting, you mourn, and you mourn bitterly for your transgressions; you pray, and pray zealously, in the heat and fervour of your spirits : Now if all this be not done in faith, it is abominable, *without faith it is impossible to please God* : hee that comes to God, hee must believe that God is, and that God is the rewarder of them that seek him : Hee that hath performed a duty, and doth expect from that performance, or in respect of that performance done an answer according to his minde, hee doth doe it in Faith, for wee must doe all we must doe in the name of our

Lord Jesus Christ, saith the Apostle, and when wee have done all we must say, wee are unprofitable servants, and it must be Christ alone that must prevaile with the Father for us. All our righteousness will prevail nothing at all with God, nor move him a jot, except it be to pull downe wrath: There is not one act of righteousness that a person doth, but when that this righteousness is finished, there is more transgression belonging to that person, then before he had performed that righteousness; and there is no composition, there's no buying out of evill by good doings, the doing of good doth not make a recompence for what sin doth, we pay but our debts in doing good: So that as there is a new righteousness performed, so there is still a new reckoning added to the former by acting righteousness, you make up a greater number of sins then before: So that it is only Christ from whom we must have the expectation of successe in whatsoever thing we desire.

In a word, let a mans righteousness be never so exact; yet that righteousness is not according to the will of God, which hath not Gods end which he proposeth in the doing of righteousness. You shall find beloved, the generall rule of Christ, and his Apostles to be this, that what we doe, we must not onely doe in the Name of Christ, but also to the Lord, and for the Lord: being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, let us serve him in holinesse and righteousness: It is not, let us serve our selves in holinesse and righteousness, but let us serve him; You are bought with a price, therefore, saith the Apostle, glorifie God in your bodies and spirits, for they are Gods: Hee doth

doth not say, being bought with a price, let us now seek our own good, as if we were still our own men; as if we had now liberty to trade for our own selves: You are not your own, and therefore not your own, because you are *bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your bodies and spirits.* It is most certainly true, that God having provided through Christ all things appertaining to life and godlinesse for his people; he thereby calls off his people from all self ends, and by-respects in his services, to have only respect to him in them. He hath done all that may be done for you, therefore there needs no doing at all for your selves.

Obj. But some may say, peradventure, this is a way to overthrow all righteousness at one clap: what all that ever a man doth, though he doth it never so Spiritually, though never so exactly, to no purpose and vain? Doth a man get nothing by all the righteousness he doth perform, then we had as good sit still and do nothing at all, will some say?

Ans. This is a carnall reasoning indeed; look but into the ground of this argument, and it will discover nothing but the selfishnesse of the person that makes it. I dare be bold to say, that that person that will doe no righteousness, but simply for his own sake; who if he should know before hand, that his righteousness will get him nothing, would therefore sit still and doe nothing; I dare be bold to say, he had as good sit still indeed, and doe nothing; He serves himselfe, not God, and though he doth perform righteousness never so exactly if; he serves himselfe, God will never reckon that he serves him. When *Self* is eyed, we can never serve

But, beloved, though the righteousness we are to perform be superfluous and vain, in respect of any power it hath with God to move him to doe us good; yet it is not altogether superfluous. It is most true, that all the righteousness of man cannot prevaile with God, to do us good, there is but one mover of God, the man Christ Jesus, who is the only and sole mediator. If you will have your own righteousness to be your mediator with God, to speak to God for you, to prevail with God for you; What is this but to put your righteousness in the room and place of Christs? What is the mediatorship of Christ else but for *Christ* to come between God and man, and to be the *daies-man* to lay his hand upon God and man, and at once to reconcile them? And shall your righteousness be the *daies-man* to lay hands upon God and man? then farewell *Christ*, and his mediatorship, for this is the peculiar office of Christ, to be mans *mediator* and *advocate* with the Father, to prevail with the Father for any good for us: So far therefore as any person doth look after his own righteousness to bring glad tydings from God to him, so far forth a man establisheth his own righteousness in the roome and place of the righteousness of God, which proceeds from the ignorance of the righteousness of God, and will in the end prove a stumbling block to men, and a Rock of offence to them. All this while I desire not to be mistaken. Some, it may be, will desire to know then to what use this righteousness of ours serves, seeing it is not of power to prevail with God; *my righteousness extends not unto thee*, saith David, not to God, but it may goe over to men;

men; my righteousness extends to the Saints of the Earth, and to such as excell in vertue, Psal. 16. 3. our righteousness is appointed for excellent uses; if we could be contented with those uses God hath ordained it unto.

First, our righteousness serves as a reall way to manifest our thankfulnes to God, for what we have already received of God: in Psal. 103. *David is excellent, my soule praise thou the Lord, and all that is within me praise his holy name; why, what is the matter David? Who hath forgiven all thine iniquities, and healed all thy infirmities, who hath redeemed thy life from death, and crowned thee with loving kindnesse and mercy.* Mark it well I pray, all that is within us must be praise and nothing but praise, and the ground is this, God doth pardon our sinnes, heale our infirmities, and supply all our wants, in consideration of this, all that is within us should continually expresse his praise.

Againe secondly, there is this usefulness in our righteousness, namely, that we may serve our generation; and the Apostle gives this charge, that men study to maintaine good works, because saith he these things are profitable to men, as we therefore may do good to men, so according to our ability, and talent received, we must employ our selves to the utmost for that end and purpose. The heathen men could say, *They were not made for themselves, but for others.*

Therefore there is this usefulness in our righteousness, that others may receive benefit by it: *Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing your good works may glorifie your Father which is in Heaven: that*

that men may be drawn on to glorifie God, we must shine before men in a godly conversation.

Thirdly, our righteousness is usefull as it is the ordinance of God, wherein the Lord hath appointed us to meet with him, and wherein he will make good those things which before he hath promised; and this is the very end and ground of our *fasting*, and *prayer*, and *mourning* in our exigents, and extremities; not that these duties doe at all prevaile with God, or at all move him. For it is God that doth move even these services, and all the spiritualnesse in us in these services he moves in us; And therefore he moves them in us, because when we are moved by his Spirit, and according to his will come forth to meet him where he doth appoint, there he will pour out himself in grace and love, according to his promise, not according to our performances. Thus I say, this great objection may be answered easily, *why we doe fast and pray and mourne in adversity, if they doe us no good?* I say, though they doe us no good, yet we fast and pray in that the Lord saith, come to me, meet me in this ordinance, and in that ordinance, and I will come with my hands full, then, and there I will poure out that which mine own freeness hath engaged me to doe for you: Is it not injustice not to meet him then? We do confesse our sins to him, but what is the ground of forgiveness, not our confession of sins, not our fastings, and prayers and mournings, and tears, but *I, even I, am he that blotteb out thine iniquities, for mine own name sake, and will remember thy sins no more.*

I will draw towards conclusion. In a word, who

who ever he be that is selviſh in his owne righteouſneſſe and goes about to eſtabliſh his own righteouſneſſe in the room of Gods, labouring to procure ſome good unto himſelf therby, and makes that righteouſneſſe doe that for him, that *Gods righteouſneſſe* ſhould doe; ſo making an *idoll* of it.

Fiſt, hee playes the moſt diſhoneſt part with God that can be. Doe you profeſſe your ſelves to be the ſervants of God? If you be the ſervants of God, what diſhoneſty is there in you, that you profeſſing to ſerve him, doe notwithstanding by ſecret and by ſtealth ſerve your ſelves? If an Apprentice ſhould hide himſelf all day long, to earne, and gaine money for himſelf, might not the maſter juſtly taxe him for a diſhoneſt fellow? Why doth the maſter keep him and find him, but that all he doth, he ſhould doe for him, and not for himſelf? Are you at Gods finding, or are you at your owne? Miſerable are you that are at your owne finding: Are you at Gods finding then, and not at your own? What is that you ſeek for, and what is that you would get by the righteouſnes you ſeek ſo eagerly after? The truth is, there is nothing to be gotten that you have not already, if you have *Chriſt*; *All things are yours, and you are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods.* Are you one of Chriſts? A man need not worke for that which is his owne already; Why then doe you worke for that which is yours already? Are you in Chriſt, or are you not in Chriſt? Do you worke to get into Chriſt? Alasſe! how long might men worke out of Chriſt, and worke themſelves into hell at laſt? What can a man get of God by all his righteouſneſſe and works, if hee hath

hath not Christ to get it for him ? Therefore all things are yours , because you are Christs , or else you shall have nothing at all. God gives nothing of gift, and of his deare love, but as men are in Christ, and for Christs sake : Therefore you doe but labour in vaine, if you labour for that which is yet to be produced.

But doe good to others , *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*: Let these be the ends of your services, work because good is already made sure to you, and not to make it sure : When a Father settles an inheritance upon his Son, hee makes the deed so, that the Son shall not worke for the Fathers means; because the Father hath passed over all that he hath to his Sonne, he serves out of love, for what he hath already received, not for what is hoped for.

And as there is dishonesty in *selfe seeking* : so secondly, there is a foul blur cast upon God Beloved, if you should see a servant goe about the streets complaining thus, Sir, help me to a little worke, I must starve, except I can work for my selfe; what would you think of this mans master ? surely you will say he is a hard master, that his servant must starve except he doe seek for himself, and purvey for himself : You that say in your hearts, you are undon, you must perish, you are lo^d, except your prayers and humbling of your selves can get some supply : Is not this a working for your selves ? Is not this a plain saying There is no trusting to God, and that we must worke for our selves ; or else wee shall perish ?

I should come to consider the other particulars
in

in the text, but the time not permitting, we will winde up all in one word of application.

We now stand before the Lord, and among other mercies, we expect this great mercy, *salvation*, not onely *salvation* in heaven, but *salvation* from the sword: It is not; it not must be your *good doings* that must procure it; It must not be your *repentance* that must bring it: You must not rest upon your performances to get it; do all that God calls for when you are in his way, in this respect be doing; but as for your help, look up unto the Hills from whence it cometh. Your help stands in the name of the Lord, that made heaven and earth: And therefore in the expectation of help, all your businessse must lie in this, *stand and see the salvation of the Lord.*



SERMON X.

A zeal of God proves not a Man a Child of God.

Rom. 10. 2, 3, 4. *For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge: For they being ignorant of Gods righteousness, & going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God: For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness, &c.*

He Apostle in the former Chapter doth
T more plainly and fully lay downe the
 absolute freenes of the grace of God
 alone to peace, life, and salva-
 tion, then any where else; clearly shewing
 that

that meerly and onely for his owne good pleasure sake, he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; especially in that instance of *Jacob* and *Esau*, he tells us plainly, that God hath no regard in the world unto good or evill, that might be done by either of them; but before ever they could doe any such thing, it is expressly written of them, *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.*

And the reason why God takes nothing into his consideration, either good or evill done by the creature as a motive to his love, the reason the Apostle gives there is this; *That the purpose of God might stand according to election, not of works, but of grace:* That is, that all the world may see that the first thoughts of God in his election, had no eye in the world unto any thing that the creature might doe, which should have any prevalencie with him, to sway him this way or that way; it was not the consideration of *Esau*, as one that would be resolute and peremptory in a way of sinfulness, that was a motive with God to reject him; nor was it the consideration of any propensitie in the spirit of *Jacob* to yeeld unto calling; or of any inclination in *Jacob* to glorifie him being called; I say, none of these considerations entred into the thoughts of God, when he established his love even in election it selfe upon *Jacob*. his thoughts were meerly upon his own good pleasure within himself. As if he should see a whole heap of creatures together, and as it were, if I may so speak, blindfold of any good the creature could have to move him; hee picked out this, and that, and t'other creature, without respect of any difference between them.

Then

Then he comes in the closure of ~~the~~ ninth chapter, to shew how desperately his owne brethren after the flesh, the Jewes, did reject this revealed will and pleasure of God, concerning good to men, they would have something considerable in the creature, as of prevalency to move God to doe good to such, rather then to such a creature: This very conceit the Apostle calls a stumbling block, at which they fell: Now lest the Apostle should seem to speak all this out of spite, or out of prejudice, or out of the injuries they had done to him; therefore that he might not be thus understood, at the beginning of this chapter, he doth confesse that *his hearts desire and prayer was that they should be saved:* He did bear no ill will in the world to them; nay, he saith to us, that he would be contented to be cut off for his brethrens sake: And after he had acquitted himself from sinister respects, hee begins to declare the truth as it is in Iesus, and first he comes to tax them, and shew where their error lay, and grants that it doth not lie in any defect of zeale, for, or after God: for, saith hee, *I heare them record they have a zeale of God* If this would have served their turns to be zealous for God himselve; there was no defect in that, the Apostle will testifie for them, that they were exceeding cordiall, and not cordiall in respect of themselves, but in respect of God himselve, they had not a zeale simply for their own base ends, but their zeale had an eye upon God himselve, it was *a zeale of God*, whether you consider it a zeale wrought by God, or a zeale tending unto God, either wayes, their zeale was *a zeale of God*, a zeale after God. I know that there may be a
zeale

zeale wrought by God, in respect of common mercy, or zeale in respect of peculiar mercy; this was a zeal of the common mercy of God.

Thus much in effect, I have spoken heretofore upon this Text; upon which I made severall inquiries, as first, what righteousnesse of their own this was which they went about to establish; secondly, what it is to establish a mans own righteousnesse: Which two I have handled in my former discourse upon this Text Notwithstanding, I shall at this time speak somewhat more largely concerning the second, and so if the time will permit, proceed unto the rest of my inquiry. But by the way, I shall speak something concerning the zeal here mentioned by the Apostle.

By the way therefore, before I leave these words; give me leave to tell you, *It is possible a person may have a zeale of God, and yet be far from being a Believer*: Let that be the first observation: I ground it thus: The *Jewes* of whom *Paul* speaks, he himselfe beares record of them, they had a zeale of God: but in the next words, he sayes, they established their own righteousnesse, and did not submit to the righteousnesse of God. A zeale of God is not ground enough that a person is a believer, or that he hath received, or submitted himselfe to Christ: first, beloved, because this may seem to be harsh, I beseech you to consider seriously, how undeniable and cleare the position I have laid downe is founded in the Text it selfe: I say, there may be a zeale of God; so the Apostle beares record of these *Jewes*; there was a zeale of God, yet not according to knowledge; even when they had a zeale of God, They established

their own righteousness; they did not submit to the righteousness of God: I will not dwell upon this point: All that I shall say out of it, is onely to this end, that I may undeceive many that are very subject to deceive themselves: and that I may take persons off from a sandy foundation; and so if it be possible reduce them to a rock, who are so apt to build up on the sand.

I know beloved, it is cryed up much in the hearts of many poore wretches, I say, cryed up much, that if they have but a zeal of God in their hearts, it is enough to serve them for ever, they are beleevers, they are members of Christ, and it is injurious unto the people of God, as they think to tell them, those that have a zeal of God in their hearts, yet for all that, they may not submit to the righteousness of God; but stumble at the stumbling-stone, and fall for ever.

All the difficulty I know, lies in this, what it is for persons to have a zeal of God? Or whether there be not a zeal of God in those that are beleevers, which is palpably discerned, from the zeal of God in those that doe not submit to the righteousness of God? I grant, there is a difference beloved; but as this zeale of God hath reference to our righteousness, or unto an obedience to the Law, you will hardly find a difference: A zeal of God to set up God in Christ, to give Christ the pre-eminence in all, that nothing is to be done with God, but onely by Jesus Christ, to throw downe every thing in the world, that offers to come in with Christ, to deal with the Father, I say, a zeal of God in this kind is not communicable to any person that submits

submits not to the righteousness of God : but to be zealous, that is to say, to be cordiall, hearty, reall, and that with fervency, and earnestnesse of spirit, towards obedience to the Commandements of God, and to have an Eye in such obedience unto God himselfe, to seek him in such obedience ; this, I say, is a zeale of God, that is common unto such as do not submit to the righteousness of God, as well as those that do submit to it. Therefore as there is a community in this zeal, so this zeal is not possibly able, sufficiently to clear up to persons, that because they are thus zealous, therefore they are the children of God, and have the righteousness of Christ.

These *Jewe* the Apostles here speaks of, (marke it well beloved) you shall find they were exceeding extream and vehement, even in setting up, and promoting obedience to the Commandements of God, I say, with an earnestnesse of spirit, as when they offered to stone Christ himselfe (the Pharisees I mean) it was meerly out of the extremity of their zeal and fervency of spirit, because they conceived Christ was a great blasphemers, and breaker of Gods will, for making himselfe equall with God, said they : How could they contain themselves, so long as Christ would, as they thought, usurp, and presume so far, as to take the incommunicable privileges, and immunities of God himselfe ? The Apostle saith of himselfe, and of the rest of the Jews, if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory : and saith he, though I persecuted the Church of God, yet I did it ignorantly ; all this results to this much, that the meer inroaching upon God, as they understood, was that that put them on so hot, and

so eager, and so violent, upon a revenge of Gods quarrell; so that I say, the eye may be upon God, and for Gods sake men may be exceeding zealous, earnest, and fervent for the vindication of him, for the doing of his will revealed in the law, and yet for all this there may not be a submitting to the righteousness that is of God.

I apply it thus, there are many people in the world, to whom the mind of God in the Law is made knowne, wee must *not commit adultery*, &c. simply because God commands this thing, they doe refrain from the evill, they goe through all the commandements of God zealously, they look upon it as the will of God revealed to them, and doe it for Gods sake, thus imparting his own mind; they doe abstain, and refrain from the evil they doe and performe the good, because God doth require it of them; yet all this is no argument of a persons being a reall member of Christ; for all this hee may not submit to the righteousness of Christ.

Now I will adde somthing, according as I proposed, to that which hath been heretofore said unto the second Enquirie, namely, How, and wherein our own Righteousnesse is established in stead of the righteousness of God. First then observe, that these Pharisees they went about to establish their own righteousness, saith the Apostle, this righteousness they went about to establish, What was it? A righteousness according to the Law of God; *Christ is the end of the Law to every one that beleeves*; As if he had said, You, in the zeale of your spirits, think to come to the end of the Law your selves; but mistake not, if you have in your eye the expo-

pectation of comfort, and peace, and rest in your spirits from the largenesse of your spirits, in the performance of those duties you doe; this is enough to make you miscarry, though it be for the Lords sake you doe it. Beloved, let me tell you, that the Lord hath so established Christ, for the rest, and life of persons, that if they could yeeld Angelicall obedience, if they could be perfect throughout in obedience to the whole law of God, and not fail in one point of the law; If I say, from such perfection of obedience they would gather up their own comfort, or conclude their own salvation; these persons should be damned, as well as those that sin never so much; for God hath established Christ, and onely the righteousness of Christ, to be the salvation of man, I say, onely the righteousness of Christ; that if a man were never so perfect, and in respect of that perfection, would leave the righteousness of Christ, and leane to the perfection of his own righteousness, for his peace, and for his salvation; that man should miscarry, and be damned.

Beloved, all I aim at is this, that you build not upon foundations that will fail you, when you come to the triall. There is, as you shall heare by and by, if time and strength doe permit, absolutely perfection enough in the righteousness of Christ alone, for your rest and security, that you shall not need to rest to any thing you doe for peace or life. This is that which God calls you to, to goe forth from your own righteousness, to rest solely and only upon the righteousness of Christ, if ever you mean to have comfort in this world, and in the world to come.

Objeſti. You will ſay peradventure, This is the way to deſtroy all Righteouſneſſe and Obedience whatſoever ; What, a man never a jot the better, though hee be never ſo zealous after God, although his Eye and aime be after God in his zeal ? to what purpoſe ſerves all this then will you ſay ?

Anſw. I answer, beloved, the World is grown to a miſerable paſſe, that obedience, zeal, and ſeeking after God muſt be of no uſe at all, except a man himſelf be a gainer by this obedience of his. It is now as it was in the time of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſalme 4.* every one will be ready to cry out, *Who will ſhew us any good ?* This is the common out-cry in the World, if any thing in the World be propoſed to men to be done : they answer, but what ſhall I get by it ? That is the next word preſently. Am I put upon ſuch and ſuch an employment, ſaith one ; but what ſhall I gain by it ? As in thoſe Offices of employment that carry about with them a great deal of labour and expence of time, and brings no profit in to the perſon in Office ; every man will be ready to ſhun ſuch an Office, nay ready to buy out ſuch employment. This is the caſe of the World in things appertaining unto God. What doth the Law call me out unto ſuch duties and employments, ſuch zeal and fervency, to be hot in theſe ſervices and duties, and to have mine Eye upon God in the performance of them, and all this do me no good ? I had as good ſit ſtill and do nothing. But there are ſome good Common-wealths men indeed, you know have, in reſpect of others weale, put themſelves

to trouble and charge, and be so far from getting, that they shall be losers by their office; and yet for the common-wealths good, they will willingly put themselves on, when they are called out to such employments. And I must tell you beloved, except you mind chiefly, that all the duties you doe perform they are for other ends and purposes, then your own preferment, and to benefit your selfe thereby, namely, the setting forth the praise of the glory of Gods free grace, and the serving of your generation in which you live. & the study of good works, because they are profitable to men; I say, except you will fall upon the performance of duties, for the common good and benefit, without having any such conceits as what shall accrew to you therereby; you are not persons yet come to have that common spirit, and dead to the old spirit as becomes Christians.

I must tell you beloved, and that freely, there is not any duty you doe perform, when you have attained the highest pitch, that hath any prevalency, and availableness to produce, to bring forth any though the least good to your selves; I say it a gain, There is nothing you can doe, from whence you ought to expect any gain unto your selfe by doing; You ought not to seek to find in what you doe, nor to thinke to bring Christ to your selves by doing: *You are not your own, saith the Apostle, you are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your bodies and spirits.* Christ hath redeemed us, *that we should not henceforth live to our selves, but live to him that died for us.*

The Scripture is marvellous plentiful in this,

that no believer for whom Christ dyed, should have the least thought in his heart of promoting or advancing himself or any end of his own, by doing what he doth. And though, as people may think, here is a marvellous discouragement to persons, to do what God calls them to doe, when they shall have nothing for it. I answer when there is a spirit of ingenuity, as you know there is even in the World, they shall be as industrious to glorifie God, and do good to men; as if they did it for themselves. They shall do as much for good already bestowed, as if they were to procure it by their own doing.

Secondly, I answer, there can be no discouragement at all unto the performance of any thing God calls for at your hands, though you get nothing in the World by what you doe; I say, there is no discouragement, because you cannot propound or intend to your selves any possible gaine by duty; but that, what ever it is, that is a spur and encouragement unto duty, is already freely and graciously provided for you to your hand; that all your industry could not compasse and bring in, either so certainly or so plentifully, as the very grace of God, before the performance of any duty hath provided and established that good for you.

When you fall upon humiliation, fasting, prayer, weeping, and self deniall, what do you look for? In the diversity of judgment, saith one, I get this by it, prevention of many great evils hanging over my head: Another saith, peace of conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, assurance of the pardon of sin, assurance of reconciliation with God,

these things would I get by attending upon ordinances, by serving God day and night in that way, he calls me out unto. Beloved, I tell you plainly, there is none of all these things that you doe conduce a jot towards the obtaining of any of these ends, you propose to your selves; all you doe gets not a jot; nay, doth not concur in it.

Obj. You will say then, we had as good sit still, as good never a whit as never the better; Hee that works all day, and gets nothing more then hee had in the morning, had as good sit still, and doe nothing.

Ans. Let me tell you, the prevention of evill, if there be reality of evill in it, and the obtaining of good, if there be reality of good, peace of conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, pardon of sin, infallibility of miscarriage, the light of the countenance of God: All these I say, which you aime at, when you are encouraged to duty, they are provided abundantly for you, and established firmly upon you, by the meere grace of God in Christ, before ever you doe performe any thing whatsoever. To what purpose doe men propose ends to themselves, which ends are accomplished before their proposition; hath God settled all things pertaining to life and godlinesse in his Son Jesus Christ upon you for his own sake, and settled them everlastingly and unchangeably upon you, that heaven and earth shall passe away, before a tittle of the grant of God, made freely for his owne sake, shall passe? I say, hath he settled all things, so that there can come nothing to make them more secure then the grant of God himself hath made them? To what purpose

purpose then doe we propose to our selves the gaining of that to our selves in our labour and industry, that is already become our owne before wee doe labour a jot?

There are some children in the *world*, I know, that are very vigilant and very observant of their parents; and their end and aim is, that by such compliance, their fathers may settle a good inheritance upon them; But beloved, suppose a child hath manifested to it, that his father hath already passed over all his goods and land to him; and hath made a firme deed of conveyance, and cannot call it back or in, he hath passed over so much, and so firmly, he is not able to adde to that is passed over before hand: will such a child propose to himself, in his obedience and observance, the obtaining of that good his Father hath already passed? Hee knowes that is passed already, and cannot bee by any thing he doth firmer and stronger. He serves not now to get his Fathers lands, but he serves to glorifie his Father that so freely hath settled his land upon him. So I say of beleevers, that have the temper of Christ true bred indeed; They in the Gospel of Christ find all things that doe appertain to life and godlinesse, they find them all so passed over by Gods goodnesse and free grace to them; that the Lions shall want and suffer hunger, before they shall lack any thing that is good: must wee now labour to gaine these things, as if they were in agitation; and as if they were yet referred to our will or to our evill *walking*; that as we shall *walk*, so we shall speed? This is to argue beloved, that God is yet to determine with himselfe, how to dispose of

of the good things that he will bestow upon his people, and that he gives good things according to their good or evill carriage : and so the goodnesse of God to his people must depend upon his peoples goodnesse to him, so that as mens works will prevail with God, so God will poure out his bounty unto them.

But beloved, without respect to good or evill, as I said before, the Lord hath everlastingly established all that ever he meant to doe ; and no more will he do to the end of the world to any people he hath chosen in his Son. The Lord in Christ from everlasting hath set down peremptorily what he will do for you, and there is no intervening acts and carriages of yours that make any alteration in the Lord at all, to crosse out what he hath written, and to put in what he had left out : The Lord doth nothing to his people upon conditions in his people, as if he did refer himselfe still to those conditions, and did suspend what he meant to do to his people, till he did perceive how they would carry themselves to him.

All that I sayme at is this, to let people know that it is not a vain thing to yeeld due obedience to any thing that God requires, though the Lord intend not that by our obedience, we shall gain something, which in case of our failing, we shall miscarry of : We say, the Lord hath firmly established upon his own people every thing that concerns the peace, comfort, and good of his people, simply and meerly for his own sake, without respect or regard to any thing his people do perform : That they are to doe, they are not to do it with any Eye to their own
advan.

advantage, that being already perfectly compleated to their hands before they do any thing; but simply with an Eye to glorifie God, and to serve their generation, and therein to serve the Lord, and therein to set forth the praise of the glory of his grace that hath done so abundantly for them. Oh that people were but so far enlightned, to behold how graciously the Lord hath provided for them, that he doth not now leave himself in a kind of suspense to deale well or ill with them, as they should carry themselves well or ill to him.

I know the contrary to this, is too rife in the hearts of persons that have not yet received the light of the glorious Gospel of Iesus Christ, having this conceipt, as if all the carriages of God to men were according to mens carriage to him. But beloved, there is no such thing, this is but the establishing of mans own righteousness to expect the dealings of God to him, as he himselfe deales with God, and that therefore he will be righteous, that he may be happy. Oh! beloved, I beseech you enter seriously into your own thoughts, and consider, whether or no this be not to bring back againe the Covenant of Works, even to believers; namely, that it shall fare well or ill with believers as they can obey, or as they doe disobey the Lord God. The Apostle in this Chapter vers. 5. doth expressly tell us what the Covenant of Works was, *Moses describes the righteousness of the Law thus, Hee that doth these things shall even live in them*: I pay mark it well Beloved, this is the righteousness of the Law, that the Apostle himselfe in the next verse doth oppose to the righte-

righteousnes of God, that he calls the righteousness of faith : Moses describes the righteousness of the Law thus, *Hee that doth these things shall even live in them : but the righteousness of Faith, saith he, speaks on this wise : say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into Heaven ? That is, to bring Christ from above : or who will descend into the deepe ? That is, to bring Christ up againe from the dead : But what saith it ? The word is nigh thee, in thy heart, and in thy mouth, this is the word of faith that wee preach. I say, the Covenant of works doth stand upon these termes, so much doing, so much life : upon the other side, Gal. 3. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Law to doe them. Here is the other branch of the Covenant of works, so far as I faile in doing, so far must I be under the curse ; Now you can looke for no better then wrath and vengeance from Heaven, so long as you do run on in these principles, and make them the foundation of your good. So far you make your selves liable to the Covenant of works ; no more good, no more comfort, no more peace, no more rest, but as you can do this, and that, what is this else but *do this and live ?**

I beseech you enter into your own hearts concerning this particular : when you do yeild your Obedience to God, you come to Church and go to Prayer, and fall to Fasting, Weeping, and Mourning, and self-deniall, keeping the Sabbath, dealing righteously, honestly and justly with men. What is it you aime at in all this ? That God may do you good, that God may be gracious and loving to you, that God may speake peace to your spirits ; then it necessarily followes, that life is
that

that in your eye that puts you upon that you doe, and so you doe that you may live. Now this is the righteousness of the law, that righteousness which is opposed to the righteousness of faith; Now know that there is no submitting to the righteousness of God, while there is an establishing of the righteousness of the law of *Moses*; namely, to doe righteousness that you may live; to refrain from evil, to the end you may not be cursed; he that proposeth cursednes, or life; cursednes if he do not do, or life if he doe the will of God; hee that proposeth this to himself, is *under the law*, and not under grace.

Christ, as you hear in the next verse, is the end of the Law to every one that doth beleeve. What is that? He is the end of the curse of the law, hee is the end of the life of the law, there is no curse to be pronounced to a beleever, when hee breaks the Law, there is no life to be expected by the beleever upon his obedience to the law; *Christ* is the end of the life and curse of the Law, hee himselfe being made a curse for us, as it is written, *curst is every one that hangeih on a tree*. Secondly, our life is hid with God in *Christ*: hee is the life, no life but in the Son, he that hath the Son, hath life; hee that hath not the Son hath not life, saith the Apostle: all this argues plainly, that all that life that is to be expected, whether it be life it self, or the conducting of things that doe appertaine unto the comforts of life, all this is to bee expected from the Sonne of God, and not from any obedience to the Law; if thou at any time reade a curse to thy selfe, upon any transgression of the

the Law, and darest receive that curse against thy self in respect of that transgression, Christ is not the end of the Law to thee, namely, thy soule takes not Christ as the full curse of the Law, taking away all the curses of the Law, that otherwise the Law would pronounce and execute upon thy person.

Beloved, I need not apologize; you know what the Apostle speaks in 2 Cor. 5. *God is in Christ, reconciling the World unto himselfe, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed to us the word of reconciliation, upon which, faith the Apostle we are the Ambassadors of God, beseeching you in Christs stead to be reconciled unto God*: I thinke I need not make an apology; he that is the Minister of the Gospel ought to declare and proclame the word of reconciliation to you, by his own Son Jesus Christ, peace through his Son, and atonement through the blood of his Son alone: either we are the Ministers and Messengers of Christ, or the Ministers of Moses: we are the Ministers of the Covenant of works, or the messengers of the Covenant of grace; beloved so far as we urge upon you, as you do you shall live, and as you doe evill you shall be accursed; so far we are the Ministers of the Covenant of works; but when we come and say that *God is in Christ, reconciling the World unto himselfe*, that is, if we say that Christ bore the curse, and that you need not fear the curse, though you fall into sin, you may be sure that *God hath reconciled you so in his Son, that your fals (being Believers) shall not break peace between God and you*; this peace is everlasting, it is not changeable, God is not a friend to day with people, and
fall

fall out with them to morrow ; whom he loves he loves to the end, now this is your busines to draw people unto Christ.

And we may do some good to let you see what advantage there is in Christ for you : For thereby you may be induced not to establish your own righteousness against him and his. We shall sin every day , *in many things we sinne all*. But the busines we are to doe is this , to let you know though there be sins committed yet there is no peace broken , because the breach of peace is satisfied in the Son, is satisfied in Christ ; there is a reparation of the dammage, before the dammage it self be committed : *Christ* had in his Eye, and so had the Father too, all the dammages that should fall out to the end of the world , by his own people, and he did not pay a price for some that were present only, but he paid the dammages of all that should come after , from the time of his suffering to the end of the World : He paid the utmost farthing for every one at once : Though it may be one sin is committed to day , another is committed to morrow, and the other the third day ; God hath reconciled himself to you in *Christ* for this sinne committed to day , and that sin which will be to morrow, and so for all the rest to the end of your lives, they are paid for already. This is that which will make up the peace of a believer. The God of hope will fill us with all joy and peace in believing.

That is worth observation, beloved, the joy of a person can never be full, the peace of a person can never be compleat ; as long as there is suspicion, there

there will be quarrelling againe. What saith the soul? I sin now, and shall sin to morrow; and when I sin, God will fall out with mee, and bee angry with me, and turn away from me: I say, as long as there is such suspition, there will never be fulnesse of *peace*, and fulnesse of *joy*. Hence it is, that persons, till they come to receive the Gospell of Christ, they were through fear of death and wrath, subject to bondage all their life long: but when they come to have this peace that Christ hath purchased, *Christ* having made an atonement, and given rest, in that hee hath paid al the old scores at once: Then they may perceive, though there be this sin committed; yet notwithstanding God will not now fall out againe with them. For God had an eye upon all these sinnes when *Christ* suffered, and God took full satisfaction of his Son for this very sin; now though I sin to day God tooke full satisfaction of his Sonne for the sins of this day; Nay more, God hath acknowledged satisfaction for them all; *God* beheld the travell of his soul, and was satisfied, for that which is to come, as well as that which is past; *God* in Christ hath given a full discharge.

Look upon the account, you shal find that Christ paid and reckoned not onely for sins past and present, but for sins committed to the end of dayes: therefore in *Dan. 9. 24.* you shall find this excellent Prophecie; Yet seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy City: Here by seventy weeks he doth prophecie of the distance of time, between the time in which he spake, and the time wherein Christ should suffer: and what should he suffer for?

For the finishing of transgression, and for the putting an end to sinne, and for the making of reconciliation, and to bring in everlasting righteousness: Marke beloved, when this seventy weeks is ended. Christ is come, then there is a finishing of transgression: There is a great deale of weight in the very word, the finishing of transgression: When is a thing finished? When all is done, and nothing more needs to be done or added to it. This Church was finished when the lead was laid, and the windowes glazed, and no workman had any thing more to doe: Now the time of Christs suffering was the time of finishing transgression; as much as to say, Christ made an end of sinne; that is, God had no more in the world to reckon with persons for sinnes; after Christ in that suffering of his had paid the full price for every transgression: Beloved, if God come to reckon now with beleivers for sinne; either hee must ask something of them, or not; If not, why are they troubled? Why must they come under the rod, as it were to make up that which is not yet paid. How doth Christ then perfect for ever them that are sanctified? And how are they saved to the uttermost, they that come to God by him? When men are saved to the utmost, there needs no more to be done, either Christ hath not saved to the uttermost; if so, you must know that God cannot bring a new reckoning. There is not such dishonesty in any honest man in the world. He that hath taken all the debt of a surety, and given acquittance under his hand, hee will not come upon the principall again, a poor begger, and tell him, I must have something of you the poor man

will answer him, Sir, you have received sufficient satisfaction already of surety, He is not an honest man that will aske more : *Christ* is the surety of a better covenant; God took *Christ* bound, and *Christ* payed it, and as he took *Christ*s pay, when he received it, he acknowledged he had received satisfaction in *J. 4. 32. 11.* Hee beheld the travell of his soule, and was satisfied : The travell of *Christ* gave the Father such satisfaction, that he acknowledged he was satisfied in the travell of his soule : Why therefore should he come upon you again ? And if God will not come upon you againe, what need you fear ? It is true, as sin is contrary to the nature of God, so we ought with all reverence to make use of the help of his Spirit to oppose all sin whatsoever, but for any hurt which such sins shall do to us, it is not possible, for *Christ* hath made satisfaction ; Hee was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him : Did God wound *Christ* for sin ? If he did, it was to some purpose, or to no purpose ; If it were to purpose, then it pleased the Father to wound him, that those that were to be wounded might not be wounded. And hath *Christ* saved his people from wounding, then what need we fear that we shall be wounded for our transgressions ?

Ob. But if we do commit sin God will punish us.

Ans. This is to make the sufferings of *Christ* of none effect : for if *Christ* had not suffered, you could but be wounded ; but if *Christ* was wounded for you, why do you disparage the sufferings of *Christ*, by this false jealousie and suspicion of yours ? and besides, you shall never rest in peace

all the dayes of your life, till you goe out of your selves to the Lord Christ, and see fulnesse in him, and see that there is such fulnesse and perfection in him, that there needs no addition to what hee hath done; *In him* (saith the Apostle) *dwells the fulnesse of the God-head bodily*, and wee are compleat in him; and is it so? There is no feare then that God should look upon you, as abominable loathsome things any longer: There is inconsistency between a lovely person, and an ugly loathsome person, you are compleat in Christ; now being compleat in him, you are lovely in the sight of the Father. In *Ezek. 16.* the Prophet tells us, *and thy beauty became perfect through my comelinesse that I put upon thee*: here is a person in blood, in a loathsome condition; but for all this, as loathsome as the person is in it self, and in its owne nature, yet here is perfection of beautie, and that through the comelines of Christ: Now can the Lord abhorre that which hath perfection of comelinesse in it? Whosoever is in *Christ*, this person hath all the comelinesse of Christ upon it. Now as you look out of your selves, and your filthinesse, and look upon your selves as you are in Christ, so you shall have not onely rest and peace, but joy, and joy unspeakable and glorious, as in *Isaiah 35.* the last verse, an excellent place, *The ransomed of the Lord shall returne to Sion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtaine joy and gladnesse, and sorrow and sighing shall flie away*: Some interpret these words of the glory in heaven, but it is returning to *Sion*, and not returning to heaven: *Sion* is the Church of God upon earth; they return to *Sion*, that is, they return to Christ in

his Church upon earth, they shall returne with songs, and everlasting joy; and they shall obtain joy, and gladnesse, and sorrow and sighing shall flie away.

Object. This is not impossible you will say, beloved, but you know many of the people of the Lord Jesus, that walk sadly and diseonfolately, not having this joy and gladnesse.

Answer. I answer, there is nothing hinders the joy of Gods people, but their sins: those as they conceive, stand as a separation between God and them; Oh, they stand as a cooling card in all their joyes and mirth! But when they returne to *Sion*, they shall rejoyce in that they shall see that the blood of *Jesus Christ* the Son of God hath cleansed them from all sinne; In that they shall see the Lambe of God hath taken away all their sinnes; the Scape-goat having carried them away into the land of forgetfulness; in that they shall see that all their transgressions are blotted out as a cloud, that God will remember their sins no more: In that they shall see that they are all faire, having no spot before the Lord in them: When they shall come by the sight of the glory of the Gospel, & the light thereof to behold this estate that Christ hath brought them into, then all matter of sorrow and sighing shall flie away, and the bitterness of it shall be taken away, and then that which was the occasion of that bitterness, shall vanish too.

I doe not say, that he is no beleever that hath not this perfectly, farre be it from me to say so, there are that are beleivers that are weak in faith; and there are beleivers that are strong in faith; the more the light and glory of the Gospel shines in

the true intention of God to his people; the more shall they return to their rest, the more shall they have joy and gladnesse.

Why then, may not a Beleever say as *David* did, *the Lord hath been very bountifull to me, that I may return to my rest?* God hath done every thing in *Christ*; and taken away all things that can disturbe my peace and comfort.



SERMON XI.

God remembers not our Sinnes.

Iſa. 43. 25. I, even I am hee that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own ſake, and will not remember thy finnes.

✠✠✠✠ O have an Evangelist, a day ſtarre, to be
 ✠✠✠✠ **T** visited in lightsome times, though it be
 ✠✠✠✠ a matter of great grace; yet is it no cause
 ✠✠✠✠ of ſo great admiration, as to have the
 Sun ſhining in a dark night is matter of
 wonder: And yet there was a ſpirituell eye among
 the Jewes, that was able to ſee (in their darkeſt
 dayes) a glorious Sun in their Firmament: This eye
 was this Evangelist *Iſaiah*, I rather call him an Evan-
 gelist then a Prophet, for his bringing glad tidings
 of good things, tidings of exceeding great joy.
 The Apoſtle *Saint Paul* himſelfe the great Doctor
 of the Gentiles, and the maine exalter of *Chriſt*
 and the grace of God in *Chriſt*, goes not beyond
 this Evangelist *Iſaiah* ſpeaking ſo fully,

so clearly, and so sweetly of the freeness of Gods love, even while persons are in the lowest and worst of conditions.

Besides all other expressions of his, this very text that I have read unto you, is enough to make him an Evangelist indeed, for here he doth Evangelize or preach the gladdest tydings that ever could come to the sons of men: For herein doth he proclaim liberty to the captives, and bindeth up the broken hearted. This very expression of his, is one of the greatest causes, That *the ransomed of the Lord shall returne to Sion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads, and that they doe obaine joy and glaucesse, and sorrow and sighing doth flie away*: as the same Prophet hath it in the 35. chapter, the last verse.

Now because, as we shall see more fully, there is sweetnesse of marrow, and of wine well refined upon the lees, contained in this text, it will bee of very great importance and concernment, to understand clearly and fully to whom, or of whom the Lord doth by this Prophet speak these words. It is true, a pardon is a welcom thing to a condemned Malefactor; but a pardon for this man, when another that goes to execution hath none, is so far from being a comfort to him that suffers, that it doth but augment his misery and torment.

If the Lord for his owne sake blots out the iniquitie of such and such, and not the iniquity of such and such, it is but the augmentation of the misery of that person that hath no share in it.

In the beginning of this chapter, verse 1. the Lord mentions *jaacob* indeed, but in the sequel he

he makes it appeare that hee intends not *Jacob* according to the flesh, but *Jacob* after the spirit : For this *Jacob* and *Israel* is that company and assembly of people, that are brought together from the ends of the earth ; from the East, from the West , from the North and from the South, as wee have it expressed in Chap. 36. verse. But beloved , that you may see plainly who this *Jacob* and *Israel* is , observe but one expression in verse 7. *Thou that art called by my Name* , saith the Lord ; these are the persons whose iniquities the Lord blots out , thou that art called by my name ; What name is that ? the name of the Lord thy Saviour , verse 11. Now there is no people in the world, not the Jews themselves that had so plaine a name of their saviour upon them, as we have that are Gentiles , that are Christians, we have the true name of Christ a Saviour upon us, Christians from Christ.

And lest people should thinke , that when the Lord proclaims this grace , in the text of, blotting out iniquity and transgression, hee looks for some qualifications and dispositions, that may be amiable to win so much grace from him ; doe but observe I pray (and it is very observable indeed) the two or three verses before my text , you shall see plainly how carefull the Lord is to take off all such conceits from men , all imagination of any such expectation. There must be first graciousnes, they must be first well qualified , and then their iniquities shall be blotted out : so might some thinke ; Marke how the Lord takes it off, for in these two verses , hee doth draw to the very life the qualifications and conditions of these persons

sons whose iniquities he blots out ; Mark them well , *Thou hast not called upon mee, thou hast been weary of mee, thou hast bought mee no sweete Cane with money, neither hast thou filled mee with the fat of thy Sacrifices, thou hast made mee to serve with thy finnes, thou hast wearied mee with thine iniquities, and then upon these words follows the Text, I, even I am hee that blotteb out thine iniquities for mine owne sake, and will not remember thy finnes. Thy transgressions, mark the words, [thy transgressions] have reference to the persons spoken of before, thy transgressions, that hast not called upon me ; thy transgressions, that hast beene weary of mee ; thy transgressions, that hast wearied mee ; and thy transgressions, that hast made mee to serve with thy finnes.*

So that the point from hence is this : *That the Lord for his owne sake blotteb out the transgressions, and remembers not the sint, even of those that have not called upon him, have been weary of him, and have made him serve with their transgressions.*

I make no question beloved , but that this doctrine and proposition I have laid down, will be received of all that will but receive clear Scripture ; I have not added one tittle in the Doctrine more then is expressed in the words themselves ; And therefore I shall be the more bold to build upon such a rock as this is.

That we may the better come to the words , or rather, to our comfort in the words, we have these particulars very observable in the Text.

First , the great grace held out to these persons, and that is expressed two wayes , by two phrases. First , the Lord blots out thy transgressions.

Secondly,

Secondly, the Lord will not remember thy sins.

Secondly, besides the grace held forth, let us consider the originall, or fountain from whence this grace springs, it is *I, even I*, saith the Lord, *The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, thy Saviour*. For so you have it expressed all along the Chapter.

Thirdly, you may consider here the motive that prevails with God, to extend this grace that he shews to this people, and that is a remarkable passage; the motive is not in, not from the creature: the motive hath its spring and rise immediatly from himselfe alone, *I, even I am hee that blotte out thy transgressions for my own sake*, I do it.

Finally, you may consider to whom this grace is extended, that *blotteth out thy transgressions*; saith the text, *and will not remember thy sins*: that is, to those persons mentioned before, of which I have spoken, that had wearied him with their sins: of these briefly.

First, concerning the grace that the Lord is pleased to hold forth to his people here, namely, *the blotting out their transgressions, and not remembering their finnes*. First, let us consider what it is for the Lord to blot out transgressions? It is an usuall phrase in the Scripture, and doth import much comfort in it: it is an allusion, or an allegoricall expression; wherein the Lord is pleased to hold forth his love to man, after the manner of men; to set forth his carriage to men, according to mens carriage one to another. It is a phrase borrowed from the practice of men, that keepe their debt-books, wherein they enter, and record their severall debts men owe to them; that so, for the better helping

of helping of their *memory*, they may find what is due, and know what to demand and call for. I say, the Lord here speaking of blotting out of transgression, hath reference to such debt books, wherein he hath records, the severall debts or sins, which he enters as men commit them : Now the blotting out is nothing else but that, whereas there were such and such transgressions in the records of God, he draws a blot over them. And that the Lord here hath reference to such kind of dealing in blotting out transgressions, you may see clearly manifested unto you by that in *Col. 2. 14* where he explaining this phrase of blotting out, speaketh thus : *You, saith he, who were dead in your sins, hath he quickned together with Christ, having forgiven you all your transgressions or trespasses ; now mark what followes, blotting out, saith hee, the hand-writing of ordinances which was against us, and was contrary to us, and tocke it out of the way, nailing it unto his crosse : What the hand-writing of ordinance there is, you may plainly perceive by the words going before, namely, the forgivenesse of all our trespasses, and taking away all our sins. Now the taking away of sin is called a blotting it out and expresseed thus, the blotting out of the hand-writing that was against us, because they were as it were written down; but the Lord hath razed and blotted them out. You are not to conceive that there are really such things with God, that God did indeed keep a book, and did enter down in this book of his, all the severall actions of men, and so calling men to account, will open the book, and will read out the severall things there written: but the phrase is only an allusion spoken for our better capacity.*

And

And for this cause you shall find the Scripture doth frequently make mention of such books God hath. When the seventy Disciples came to Christ rejoicing that the Devills were made subject unto them : Christ replies, *Rejoyce not that the Devills are made subject unto you, but rejoyce rather that your names are written in the book of life.* Here is a Book, and the names of the Disciples written in that book. But if you will marke what *John* speaks in *Rev. 20. 12.* there you shall find, there is not only the book of life, but as hee speaks expressly, there are other bookes besides, out of which the dead both small and great were judged, according to their works that they had done : as if hee had said, besides the book of life, there is the booke of works, wherein the severall actions of men are recorded, by which, at the great day men are to be judged, as they are found in these books, According to the severall debts that are therein, they are to receive their sentence. Marke now, for the better apprehension of our weak capacity, the Lord hath taken up such a kind of illustration of his dealing with men, namely, by recording of our debts in bookes; yet the Lord tells us for our comfort, that though there be such bookes, yet we need not feare; For though they shall be opened, yet whatsoever was written in those bookes, in reference to us, is all crost and blotted out; and when wee come to account, there shall bee nothing reckoned unto us as a fault.

For the better illustration of this, That what comes after may be the clearer; you must understand

stand that though it bee true in the succession of ages, the severall members of Christ doe severally day after day commit ~~new~~ some, then more, and afterwards more transgressions; though this be actually done in succession of time, yet the All-seeing eye of the Lord over-lookes all, that ever should be done from all eternity, and then doth as it were with himselfe write downe the severall actions and transgressions of men, that afterwards should be committed. He registers them at first with himself, and this is all the booke that God keepes, all the entries of actions with him. Now whereas the Lord in his eternall fore-sight took notice of every action that you and I have done, doe, or shall doe hereafter; and he took notice, I say, of every one of them, and he also took notice of the nature, and quality of such actions: yet when hee had taken notice of every one of them, hee did draw a crosse over them all; For though hee saw these things thus done; yet he took a course that hee would be another way satisfied for every thing hee could demand in respect of them; and so they should remaine no longer upon the heads of those persons: As for example, suppose a man oweth upon a bill of parcells an hundred pounds, all these parcells are written in a booke under his name upon his head; after a time a Surety comes and takes all this debt, and enters this debt upon his owne head under his owne name, he being an able man: Upon this the creditor is pleased to take him for his debtor, and so transcribes every parcell of the debt from the head of the principall debtor unto the head of this Surety: now after all these parcells are entred

to the head of the Surety, by and by a crosse is drawne over the first head, whose debt it was before, untill it was brought over unto the Surety. This is the blotting out of transgression, which the Lord here speaks of, and the sense of it is no more but this; Although it is true, I know it well enough what thou hast done, and what thou hast done against me, how many and how great transgressions thou hast committed, and hereafter shalt commit; though they be all open before me, though thou art the Actor and doer of all these, and I know it; yet saith the Lord, I will blot out all this; that is, There is not any one of all these parcells of money to be reckoned for, upon thy head; but I have past them all upon anothers head, and hee hath made me, and I have acknowledged full satisfaction; I have no more to say to thee.

Here is the summe of this part of this free grace of God, the blotting out of transgression; You know, beloved, the use of writing debts in a book, namely, that a creditor may turne over at pleasure or leisure to them, and so when he looks there hee may find what every person oweth, and at discretion, there hee may take the ground-works of his action, that he layes against a person, and upon this action arrest him, and lay him up in prison, till hee payes the debt: And likewise you know the end of this blotting out too, is, namely, that when men come to look over their books, they may over-look and skip over what was written: and when the book is looked over, no notice shall be taken of such a persons name, who though hee was entred in the book, yet all is blotted out againe, and imports

to

to us thus much to the thing in hand ; That though the Lord according to the usuall manner of taking notice of actions amongst men , hath his time when he will take notice of these debts , when hee enters the debter, when he will arrest and clap him up for them; Yet when the Lord shall look over his book, he shall over-look his book , and take notice of such persons of his, whose parcells are crossed out. Therefore in *Jer. 50. 20* see how the Prophet alludes to this expression, and how hee explains the words, *blotting out of transgression, in those daies ; and at that time, saith the Lord, shall the iniquities of Israel bee sought for, and there shall be none, and the finnes of Juda, and they shall not bee found.* For I have forgiven them. Here the Prophet seems to represent the Lord to a man as one that begins to look over his books, to see what debts are owing unto him , as if the Lord were making a search ; Well saith the holy Ghost, though at such a time the finnes of this people be sought for , yet there shall be none ; It is true, they were all entred into the knowledge of God from all eternity, yet there shall be none ; that is, though they were entred, they are blotted out againe : Therefore as it is in a debt booke , though there be never so many parcels entred, though entred never so truly there ; yet when once that which was entred is blotted out againe, there is no more debt there, then if there had never been any; for all that was ever in , is blotted out : So that though the Lord be privie to what they doe , and hath recorded them in his own thoughts ; yet hee himself drawes a blot upon them, and makes them to bee nothing , whereas before till the blot was drawn:

drawn over them, they were reall debts.

And this he doth not simply in respect of forgiveness, in regard of us, it is true, it is a forgiveness; yet in respect of him it is not meerly forgiveness; For the reason and ground of blotting out of iniquity, is; There is a second head to which these debts are translated from our hands, that shall pay them better then those whose debts first they were, so that the debt being paid, God loseth nothing, for asmuch as that another hath paid all.

This is one of the most admirablest pieces of *grace*, that the thirsting soules can desire, if they had all they could wish themselves: do but think seriously upon it, suppose a man is privie to himself of murder, felony and treason, or what else you will: suppose he knows that it is known, and that there are many witnesses to attest it; nay, suppose he knew it were done in the Eye and Face of the Judge himselfe, that he saw with his own Eyes what was done, and that when all this is done, he should be drawn to his tryall: Alas in what perplexity of heart would this man be, how would he quake and tremble and be even at his wits end? He knows it was publicely done, there is no smothering of it, but that he must justly lie under condemnation for it; the Witnesses come in and swear point blank against him: And yet suppose after all this pleading, and after the bitter expectation of the sentence, the Judge himself should stand up and say, I have made search, and there is not one bill of inditement found against this man, there is not one action that may justly be laid against him, and I have nothing to say to him or
against

against this man ; how will this make the heart of this prisoner leap for joy, being so acquitted and dismissed, and having no bill found against him? Just so is our case, we have committed murther, felony, treason, rebellion, and enmity, all that can be against the Lord, we did it in the Face of God, that he knowes it is done : but when we come to tryall, God himselfe brings in an Ignoramus, God himselfe saith, here is not one Bill of Inditement against him, there is nothing but what is blotted out. And the reason is, as I said, because the Lord acknowledgeth that he hath received a satisfaction from his son, deliver him, for I have received or found a ranome, Job. 33. 24. So much for that phrase, I am he that blotte sh out thy transgressions : It followeth, And will not remember thy finnes : Here is the Ignoramus that God himselfe makes; Although the fore-men of the Grand-Jury bring in an inditement; yet saith God, I remember no such matter : Here is a plea against this man and that man (members of Christ, you must suppose them all this while) they are accounted for such and such sinners and transgressors, but I remember no such matter, saith the Lord.

Quest. But what is it for God not to remember the transgressions of men in this kind, will some say?

Ans. Beloved here the Lord speaks after the manner of men, as he did before; bookes you know are the Registers of memory, or Records for the help of memory rather. When a man comes to his book, when he comes to his bills and bonds, and there reads what such and such a man oweth, hee thereby remembreth what debts are due unto him and

and from whom : But if he comes to his book, and there can read nothing owing unto him from such a person ; he is said not to remember it, so that the memory it selfe failes : can this man now remember his debts, that cannot find that he hath any such, that cannot read them ? If a man look over his debt book, and findes there, that though such debts were written, yet now they are so obliterated that no man can read them, and that this blotting was made not casually, but upon consideration of a sufficient satisfaction : How then can hee remember these now as debts ? Thus the Lord represents himself to us, the Lord remembers not our sins, that is, the transgressions of the members of Christ come not into the thoughts of God, so as now to thinke that such and such a Man stands guilty before him of such a transgression : I say, the Lord hath not in his thoughts any such thing concerning any member of Christ. Beloved, you shall find it a frequent expression of the holy Ghost manifesting the grace of God to his owne people, namely; *God doth not remember their finnes* : David in *Psal. 25* 7 praies thus, *Lord remember not the finnes of my youth* : But look into the Covenant of Grace, wherein God doth engage himself to be the God of his people, this is the closure and shutting up of the Covenant still in *Ier. 31. 1.* and so on ; *In those dayes, and at that time will I make a Covenant with the house of Israel, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers : but this shall be the Covenant that I will make with them, &c.* And then the shutting up of the new Covenant is in these words, *Their finnes and their iniquities will I remember no more.*

So the Apostle, Heb. 1. 12 repeats the selfe same thing, repeating the Covenant word for word; and ends the Covenant with the same closure. *Your finnes and iniquities I will remember no more.* And in Heb. 10. 16, 17. Though the Apostle doth abridge the Covenant, and leaves out many branches of it, yet he doth not forget the last clause of it. *Their finnes and iniquities I will remember no more.*

So it stands for a truth, the people of God are so received into the grace and favour of God, that God doth not, nay, God will not remember their sins any more from the time that they are become members of Christ, and actually in Covenant with God, from that time for evermore, there is not once a bringing to remembrance with God, any one of their transgressions.

Obj. But some will say, This seems to be strange, what? God not remember the sins of Believers? Suppose the Lord doth forgive them, yet he must remember them, seeing they are committed every day so clearely and conspicuously in the sight of God; How is it possible the Lord should not remember them?

Ans. I answer, beloved, let flesh and blood reason and say what it will, I aske you this question, Is it the Lord himself that doth say, he doth not remember the sins of his people? If the Lord himselfe doth speak it, who art thou, O man, that dardest to question whether he doth remember them, or no? Shalt thou say, he doth remember their sins, when he himselfe saith, he will not remember them? The Apostle Paul tels us, *No man knowes the things of God, but the spirit of God:* Doth not the Spirit of God remember our sins?

God tell us these things ? Doth not hee tell us expressly, that *he doth not remember their finnes* ? And can any man know the things of God better than the Spirit can ? Thou sayest that God doth remember them, when the Spirit of God saith, hee doth not remember them.

Obj But some will be ready to say further, How can this possibly be, that God should know every sin that the beleever doth commit, and the beleever himself know the sins he commits, and yet God should not remember them ?

Ans. I answer, first suppose I could not untie this knot, or resolve this riddle to you, you must know beloved, that there are deep things of God, that none but God himselfe can dive into, that none but God himself is able to resolve, yet though it could not be resolved, let G O D be true, and all the world beliers, let not the worlds saying, *God doth remember the finnes of his people*, prevail against Gods saying, *I will not remember their finnes*; Let sense, argument, reason, and all stoop to faith, even for the testimony of Gods sake alone, though none will speak the same thing, but meerly the voyce of God himself.

But secondly, I answer, let us see whether wee can untie this knot or no : How is it possible that the Lord should not remember their finnes, seeing they are so plaine to him every moment ? There is no word in the Text that is not much heeded, and it is that which must resolve this great and difficult question, and that is this, I will not remember *your* sins, I will not remember them as *our* finnes, putting the emphasis upon the word

Thou: I, even I, am he that blotteſt out thy tranſgreſſions for my own ſake, and will not remember thy finnes; or your finnes. It is moſt certainly true, beloved, God doth remember all the actions that ever men have done, doe, or ſhall doe; Hee doth remember the nature and quality of all actions as they are: Hee remembers ſuch actions as done at ſuch times, and hee knowes the actions are thus and thus in the nature of them: and yet ſo it is, that God doth not remember thy tranſgreſſions; That is, though God remembers the things thou haſt done, yet he doth not remember them as they are thine, hee remembers the things, it is true, but not that they are thine; for he remembers perfectly that they are none of thine, hee remembers whoſe they are, he himſelf hath paſt them over, hee did decree that they ſhould become the finnes of Chriſt, and when he paſſed them over to Chriſt, they ceaſed to be thine any longer.

You know that text in the 53. of *Eſay*, verſe 6. *Hee hath laid on him the iniquities of us all; And you know that place in the fifth chapter of the firſt Epistle to the Corinthians, the two laſt verſes, Hee was made ſinne for us, who knew no ſinne, that wee might be made the righteousneſſe of God in him: Now I aſke this question, whoſe are the finnes that beleevers doe commit, when Chriſt did become their ſinne? are they not his? and if they are his, are they any longer theirs that commit them? The 2 Cor. 5. 18 ſhewes plainly, that the Lord reckons them no longer theirs, when hee hath made them once to be Chriſt, God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world to himſelfe, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them;*

much as to say, I will never reckon them thine any more, I will never impute them to thee : all that I look for in respect of thy sins, I look for it at the hands of *Christ*, for he was made sinne for us, saith the Text.

And whereas people thinke it strange, for as much as beleevers themselves doe remember their sins, that God should not remember them : I answer, if any beleevers, or members of *Christ* doe remember their sins any otherwise then God doth remember them, their memory failes them, and they are mistaken in their remembrance. If when beleevers have sinned, they have a conceit that their finnes shall be charged upon them, the truth is, they have other conceits of themselves then God hath of them : But if they will remember their sins, as God doth remember them, they must remember and know them by the light of *Gods Spirit*, that shall lead them into all truth. The Spirit of God will remember them of them indeed, and lay before them such and such actions, and tell them that they have these pollutions in them, and will convince them of the abhorrency of them : But the same Spirit will remember them withall, that the *Lamb of God* hath taken away all these sins of theirs; and that the Scape goat hath carried them away from them into a land of forgetfulnesse; thus I say, the holy Ghost, as it brings their finnes to their remembrance, so it will suggest to them also, to whom these sins are sent.

Beloved, it is matter of admirable grace full of wonder, yea even of amazing consolation, that a poor soule condemned by Satan; Nay, it

may bee, by his owne conscience, should at last heare the Lord speake, and the last words of God himself to be this, *I remember no such thing* : Now if God himself doth not remember your transgressions, you that are the members of Christ, it is no matter who remembers them : hee that shall bee Judge of quick and dead at the last day, hee will not remember them And therefore as the Apostle saith in another case, so you may say with comfort in your owne spirits ; *To me it is a very (small thing to be judged of you, or of mans judgement, 1 Cor. 4. 3.* Beloved, hee that hath said it, will stand to it, hee will never remember your sins any more ; though they be never so many, though they be never so great, hee will never call one of them to remembrance; it may bee in affliction, and when the rod of God is fallen upon thee, thy heart will be ready to raise such thoughts as these in thee : *Now God will be even with me, now shall I smart for my transgressions* ; But know this, that at that instant, when God brings afflictions upon thee, he doth not remember any sinne of thine, they are not in his thoughts towards thee, for the text saith not onely of the present instant, that God doth not remember them ; but of the future also; nay, of the everlasting future : *your sins, and your iniquities, will I remember no more.*

I beseech you, beloved, consider this one thing, you that think that God doth plague and punish you being beleivers for such and such sinnes of yours, and say, Doth not God now remember these sinnes of mine? Doth God punish such and such sins in others, and take vengeance for them, and

doth he not remember them? doth God use to doe things hand over head? doth God lay his rod and his scourge upon them, and never thinke of the cause of it? And if these afflictions be the judgement of God for these sins, certainly God must remember our sinnes, and so know them as motives and provocations, to inflict such vengeance upon them: And if God doth punish them for them, certainly God doth now remember them.

And what of all this? Is it a trueth that God hath spoken, *your iniquities and your sinnes will I remember no more*? Then surely whatsoever things befall the children of God, are not punishments for sin, they are not remembrances of sinne, the Lord must bee true and faithfull in his Covenant: And therefore, if men shall cavill against this free grace of God; yet let me request this of you, beloved, let the evidence of the holy Ghost so prevail with your spirits, that if any Creature in heaven and earth, Men or Angels, shall endeavour to contradict this, let them be accounted as they deserve. Let all give way to this truth; if any thing in the world can make it appeare to the contrary, then let it goe away with it: but if the Spirit of God doth speak it so clearly that nothing can be objected against it; let not any thing cause thee to live in so much darknesse and uncomfortablenesse as thou must doe till thou receive this grace of the Lord.

And so beloved, I have done with the second thing, there is one thing more very considerable, and that is what the Motive is, that prevails with God, that thy sinnes and iniquities should bee blotted out, and that God should not remember them,

them, what is it that moves God to do this ? Beloved, I find that the chancell of mens hearts runs usually this way.

Oh ! when God doth behold my mourning and my weeping, and observes my reforming, and knowes I am returned unto him by true Repentance, and seeth what moan I make, and what a pitifull wretch I am, when he beholds my groanings, and my meltings : Oh, this cannot but move God to pittie me, and to pardon my sins ! Oh, beloved, know the Lord hath other manner of motives to prevaile with him, then all the Rhetorick of misery in the creature can possibly be to perswade him to this grace : I say peremptorily, it is not all the Sighings, Groanings, Mournings, Fastings, Prayers, and self-deniall ; nor all the Righteousnes, that man can returne to God, that can prevaile with God to blot out the sinnes of men, and to remember them no more. But the motive is this, *I, even I, for mine owne sake doe this* : And the holy Ghost doth frequently expresse it in such termes as this, as in *Ezekiel 36.22.* after he had laid down the Covenant of Grace, he concludes with this caution, *Bee it knowne unto you, not for your sakes doe I this to you, bee ashamed and confounded for your owne wayes, O house of Israel* : Marke it, Beloved, there is nothing in the Creature doth move GOD to shew compassion upon him, but meerely for his own sake doth the Lord this to his people : but how is it, for his own name sake to do it ? I answer, it imports two things : First, the Lord doth it for his own sake, that is, he is solely and only moved to it, by himselfe and from himselfe ;
and

and there is no Creature in the World doth so much as move him to it ; I say, the Lord when he blots out the transgressions of his people (he is not so much as moved to it , and sought unto for it , there's nothing in the Creature to move God to it ; but simply of his own meere motion he did it : And this the Apostle doth expresse in abundant fulnesse , as in *Ephesians 1. verse 9.* Where speaking of redemption, he tells us expressly there, That the Lord did all according to his own good purpose that hee had in himselfe, saith the Text.

Object. But some will say , you will grant this, that Christ did move GOD to blot out transgressions.

Answer. To this I answer, that though Christ did move God the Father to blot them out, yet this stands firm still , that we do not move God to do it.

Secondly, I answer, when we do say, that *Christ* doth move God to blot out transgression, I do not separate God from Christ, *God is in Christ reconciling the World unto himselfe*, What God doth in grace to the poore creature, he doth *in Christ*, and he doth nothing of grace to sinners , absolutely considered in himselfe abstractively from Christ , but *God in Christ*.

But Thirdly, take Christ for Mediator and as he is distinguished from the Father , and then I say , that Christ as Mediator , did not first move God to blot out Transgressions ; but the motion that was within himselfe from eternity, was the root and fountaine of all ; yea, even of Christ

Christ himself as Mediator; and from this fountain was Christ raised up to accomplish these things that first were in his breast. For Christ is the mediator, that is, hee is the mean between God and us, to compose this great thing of blotting out of our transgression. Now know that the means are raised up for the bringing about the thing intended, and the means in nature are after the thing intended for the end. The School-men have a speech, *The end of things is alwayes the first in intention, though it be the last in execution.* If a man builds a house, he first proposeth to himself to what purpose it is, it is to dwell in; the habitation is first in his thoughts, and then the structure as a means, is raised afterwards to that end; so the Lord sets downe with himself, and consults with himself, how hee may shew grace to the creature thus: The creature will sinne, and I will blot out their transgressions; But how shall it be done? Well, saith God. I will send Christ into the world, this Christ shall be borne of a Woman, and hee shall die for their sinnes, having them laid upon him, and shall purchase the redemption of this people. Now Christ is the means, he is made a Mediator: But Gods determination concerning the blotting out of transgression, was of his owne motion, before there was such a thing as Christ, I mean in both his natures. And Christ therefore came, because God had determined in his owne thoughts, that such a thing should be done by him.

Fourthly, God doth this for his owne sake, not onely of his owne meere motion, but for
his

his owne end too, for himselfe Wee are apt to thinke that the Lord did blot out our transgressions, that he might doe good to us, that we might be made happy by it. It is true, the Lord did blot out our transgressions, that we might be happy, but yet this is but the subordinate end to God, and stands in subordination to a supreamer and higher end; God aims at his own glory principally, God did not therefore blot out transgressions, that wee might be the better for it principally, but that hee might attain to the thing that concerned himselfe in it. And therefore whereas the holy Ghost speaks in the Text of blotting out of transgressions *for his owne Names sake*, the holy Ghost addes these words to it; fore-shewing that God aimed at himself more then any thing concerning the good of his creature, as in the first of Samuel 12. 22. *The Lord will not forsake his people for his great Name sake.* And in the seventh of Joshua. *What wilt thou doe with thy great Name*, in the ninth verse, if thy people should smite, hee speaking of it then in that businesse of the men of Israel falling before the men of Ai. The great Argument which Joshua used to prevaile with GOD, was the great Name of God. And so in Psalm 79. 9. *Help us, O Lord, for the glory of thy Name, and deliver us, and purge away our sinnes for thy Names sake.* The meaning is this; The Lord blots out transgressions for his own sake, that is, hee doth therefore blot out transgressions, that his owne Name and glory might be the more magnified and exalted in the world: so that for his owne praise sake, the Lord doth the great things he doth.

There

Therefore the Apostle, *Ephesians* 1. 6. speaking of redemption, hee tells us, what the great end of redemption was, namely, *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein hee hath made us accepted in his beloved.*

Now you see what it is for God to blot out transgressions for his owne sake; namely, that hee might have the praise of the glory of his owne grace, in doing such marvellous things as hee doth; so that you run in a vaine course to thinke that you move God by your importunity, and humbling your selves before God: For God will not be moved with all these to blot out your transgressions; if ever therefore you would finde a motive whereon to rest indeed satisfied, that God will and doth blot out your finnes, runne to this. "The free thoughts of God, and the bowells "in himself (without regard to what is in you, or "done by you to move him to do it, or to provoke "him not to doe it) have put the Lord upon this "great worke for you.

Look into *Rom. 9.* you shall there see, that in this businesse of love, and blotting out of sinne, the Lord will therefore manifest himselfe in grace, while *Jacob* is in the womb, before ever hee could sigh and grone to God: he did it then that it might appeare not according to works, but according to the purpose of election, that it might stand not of works, but of grace: and so when souls doe partake of this grace of the blotting out of our iniquity, they may cry out as the Psalmist did in another case, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be the praise and glory of it:* And it is certaine, beloved,

beloved, that the Apostle tells us, *Wee are justified by the grace of God, not of workes, lest any man should boast.* And therefore the Lord will have that in all the ordering of the worke of grace, the creature shall have no stroke, that when the grace is manifested, and the creature partakes of it, (the creature having no hand in it) he that glorieth, may glory in the Lord.



SERMON XII.

The Great Giver, and his free Gifts.

1 Cor. 2. 12. *Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.*

After a wonted tender-hearted salutation
A and congratulation to this Church of
Corinth, from vers. 1. of the first chap.
to vers. 10. the Apostle Paul falls upon a
seasonable exhortation to unanimity and concord
of spirit among them; relating at large the occasi-
on of this his exhortation to them, to wit, the no-
tice he had received of a dangerous strife and con-
tention fallen out among them, in respect of their
partiality to persons; this the Apostle continues to
verse 17. and 18. of that chap. and from vers. 18.
to the closure of the chapter, the Apostle declares
both the scope of his ministry in generall, and the
diversity of successe this ministry of his found
both among Jewes and Gentiles.

Now

Now in the beginning of this second Chapter, the Apostle returns back to this Church of *Corinth* in speciall, and whereas the strife was, one was of *Paul*, and another of *Apollo*, and another of *Cephas*: the Apostle doth acquit himselfe from any thing that might in respect of himself tend to, or occasion such strife and quarrell: Therefore in the first verse of that second chapter, hee doth wholly disclaim all of man, which might tend to exalt man among them, *He came not in the excellency of speech, & in words of mans wisdom to them*; his ministry was exercised in a low plaine dealing way, without either humane rhetorick or wisdom of man. This hee doth amplifie in the fourth verse of the Chapter, for his part, he used no manner of *enticing words* to inveagle or beguile them.

Secondly, the Apostle here goes on to declare to them the maine subject of this ministry, which he drove at, which hee commends both to Ministers and people, as the great thing they were to minde concerning Divinity; a rule and a pattern well worth imitation of all, vers. 2. *I desire*, saith the Apostle, *to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified*; he did not care that the people should know any thing else in the world, so that he might impart Jesus Christ, and him crucified unto them.

Thirdly, the Apostle declares to them the reason why hee came with such plainnesse and simplicity, without dresse in the exercise of his ministry, in the fifth verse; namely, *That their faith might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God*: As if he should say, they that are wrought upon
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by humane Rhetorick, and finenes of language, and are taken with respect of any fluency of words, those mens *faith* is built upon humane wisdom, they that are taken, with the simplicity of the Gospell, as it is in Iesus simply preached; their faith is built upon the rock it self.

Now lest the Apostles Ministry of the Gospell, might grow into contempt, because he waved that which was humane in it, therefore in the latter end of the fourth verse, he doth vindicate power and life of his Ministry, even while it was so plain, and without mans wisdom: Though *Paul* came not in excellency of speech, and Mans wisdom; yet he came in the *demonstration of the spirit, and with power*. So though the Apostle doth condescend to the weaknes of this Church, being but babes in *Christ*, as he speakes of them; yet he would have them know, for all he condescends to their weaknesse in exercising his Ministry in so low and plain a stile for their sakes: Nevertheless, when he deals with those that are perfect; that is, higher grown, he can arise, in a higher flight, and deal in more grown and deeper Mysteries, then he did with them: and in the seventh and eighth verses, the Apostle doth illustrate what depths there were in those mysteries that he did preach to those that were capable of seeing them; and that is quoted out of the Prophesie of *Isaiah*, *Eye hath not seene, Eare hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of men, to conceive the things that G O D hath prepared for them that love him.*

Obj. Now whereas some might be ready to object, as the false Prophets did to *Micajah*, which way

way want the spirit of God from us, is thee? Some might object. If wisdom and prudence could not dive into those mysteries, Paul spake of; how could Paul come by them? Paul was of no more learning then they; they were as much insighted in the Law as he, if they could not, how could he?

He answers in the words following, Though eye hath not seen them, nor eare heard them, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive them; Yet God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit: Beloved, let me tell you, there are secrets of God, that all the learning in the World shall never attain unto, only the teaching of the Spirit of God shall acquaint people with them; therefore it is a branch of the New Covenant of God; Those in Covenant, They shall be all taught of God: And they shall no more need to say to their Neighbour, Know the Lord, for they shall all know the Lord; that is, by his own teaching, they shall be all taught of God: 't is true in the Ministry of the Gospel, this knowledge comes usually to the people; but it is not the wisdom of man, that either doth or can impart the secrets of God to the people of God: and those are the Mysteries, the Apostle saith he preacheth unto those that are more grown and perfect. There is strong meat for those that are old, as well as milk for Babes.

Now the Apostle doth proceed on, namely, to shew how it comes to passe that the Spirit of God, and only the spirit of God should impart and communicate these mysteries, when the wisdom of the world cannot possibly bolt out these mysteries, saith the Apostle, God hath revealed them to us by his spirit:

For the spirit searcheth all things, even the deepe things of God; I, but some may say, the knowledge of these Mysteries may come some other way. To take off that in the following words, vers. 11. He shewes expressly that the Mystery of the Gospel cannot come any other way, but by the spirit of God only, as he will use instruments to himself. I say, the originall of discovering the mysteries of the Gospel is not demonstration by way of Argument or discourse; but the demonstration is by the Spirit of God. And the Apostle doth illustrate it by way of comparison, that the Spirit only is the originall of the discovery of the mysteries of God: *as no man knowes the things of man, save the spirit that is in man, so no man knowes the things of God, save the Spirit of God*: The meaning of the Apostle in this place, is this, you have a thought in your hearts, and if you give no hint of this thought by externall expressions, no man can conceive what you are thinking; till you shall some way evidence your selves: now as it is impossible for any man to dive into such a thought; so it is as far impossible for all the creatures in the World to dive into the Mysteries of God; but the Spirit that is of God only revealeth them.

Now in the words of my Text, the Apostle begins to draw to a conclusion of this discourse, and to sum it up to a head: For having given this description in generall concerning the Spirits revealing things that could not otherwise be seen or known, he concludes that it was his, and the case of others: *Now wee have not received the spirit of the world, but the spirit that is of God, that wee might know the things*

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things that are freely given to us of God : Beloved, let me tell you by the way, it is a matter of great consequence and establishment to know the scope and intention of the holy Ghost in the severall portions of Scripture, especially building places, that containe life, peace and joy; And therefore I have the more insisted upon the opening of the Text ; For if you take a portion of Scripture, and cut it off from the dependance ; you may misse the intention of the Spirit therein : For the Word may sound to another sence, then the drift is, except the coherence be seen and observed. This I say, that in reading and preaching Scripture, there must be great regard had what the holy Ghost doth principally aime at in those Scriptures : thus much by the by.

In the Text there are three things considerable: First, what the Apostle aimes at here, or the subject matter he is upon, namely, the manifestation of the things freely given of God, or to impart to us this, that there are things freely given of God to men.

Secondly, he doth speak of them as they may be known ; *wee have not received the spirit of the World, but the spirit that is of God, that wee may know, &c.*

Thirdly, he shewes how the knowledge of these things that are freely given of God is attained, and that he sets out first, *negatively*, not by the spirit of the World : Secondly, *affirmatively*, by the spirit that is of God.

The proposition is this, *That the things freely given us of God, come to be knowne, not by the spirit*

the world; but by the Spirit which is of God, being received; I am confident none here will stumble at the proposition being so naturally raised from the words of the text; I will not therefore spend time about that.

There are these particulars in it worth consideration; and that you may suck and be satisfied at the breasts of consolation; consider first, what these things are, the Apostle speaks of, that are freely given of God. Secondly, what it is for these things to be given. Thirdly, what it is for them to be given freely. Fourthly, what it is to know these things that are thus freely given. Fifthly, how they are made known to us by the Spirit which is of God.

First, what these things are that are freely given of God, for the illustration of which, know first, that it is most certainly true indeed: All things whatsoever, are the free gift of God to men; Hee causeth the sun to shine upon the just, and upon the unjust: and it is the gift of God that hee doth it: I will not touch one thing by the way, and I will be brief in it: Know this, if Adam and his posterity had stood in their innocency, and had continued in the Royall Law, and never had offended, that every life that was annexed unto obedience, I say, every life had been a free gift. And therefore if you speak of merit properly as requiring a reward proportionable, and having equipollency to the work, there could not be meriting in a state of innocency; but that very life, had it come from the performance of perfect obedience, I say, even that very life it self had been a gift of God. I will give you one illustration, that will

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satisfie you fully in it. Look upon all the creatures, as for instance, look upon the Sunne, that *rejoyceth as a gyant to run his race*. It had his Law as wee had, set before him, a kind of duty the very creature performes to the Creator. If God should be bound to reward according to proportion, and so by way of merit, mans obedience with life, why not the obedience of the Sun in the Firmament as well as man? the Sunne is a creature, as man is; as a creature man hath the same dependence upon the Creator as the Sun hath, what hinders but that the Sunne in the Firmament should merit as well as man, seeing the Sunne in the Firmament performs as compleat obedience in its way, as man could doe? Beloved, carry this for a principle *everlastingly* along with you from first to last, all that the creature partakes of, it hath it from God. And so God oweth nothing to the creature for that he partakes of, save that he oweth by *free grace*. Had not God freely without motive put himself upon this, that man should have life upon his obedience, man could challenge life no more than any other creature could doe.

But I will not follow this, these things in general, not being the things the Apostle principally aimes at here: For though it be true, all things in general are the free gifts of God; yet here he speaks of things in a restrained way, of some special things peculiar to the beloved of the Lord; as the Psalmist speaks of, *Psal. 25. 14. The secret of the Lord are with them that feare him*: Or of things as Christ speaks of *Matth. 11. 25. I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,* much

thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent of the world, and hast revealed them unto babes : even so, O Father, because it pleased thee. The things freely given of God, are the things the wise of the world cannot reach ; they are hid from the wise, they are revealed and communicated unto babes. What are those things, you will say ? I can give you but a touch : for if I dive into the depth of the things, there will be no end, I should never come to the bottome.

First of all, God gives *himself*, and this is such a gift, as is a *mystery* the world doth not reach ; they know not what it is : It is the greatest gift that ever God could give the world, to give over Himself : It contains in it the most inestimable and invaluable treasure that is in heaven or in earth. For God to passe over himself in such a way of propriety, as that hee hath no more command over himself then the creature can have power over him, for that which is good for him ; this I say, is the strangest thing that ever was ; and yet God gives himself to men, that is, he gives man as true a propriety in himself, as he himselfe hath in himself.

You know, the Lord speaking of the giving of himself, doth expresse it thus, *I have married thee to my self in truth and righteousness.* Marke what the drift of it is, a husband marrying a wife by Gods owne pleasure gives himself up to the wife. Mark how the Apostle expresseth it, *The husband hath not power over his owne body, but the wife ; as the wife hath power over her owne body, but the husband,* as much as to say, God being married to a person, he

hath not that power over himself, as to deny himself or the use of himself to those to whom he hath given himself; the beleever hath power with God so farre as God can be usefull unto the person to whom he gives himself. There is as much propriety in a beleever to God, as there is in a wife to her husband. This Gods giving himselfe by a Deed of gift, is frequently mentioned unto you in Scripture, but especially in the *Covenant of grace*: wherever this covenant is repeated, this is the burthen of the song, as I may say, this is the great businesse, *I will be their God*, saith he, *and they shall be my people*. Here is the passing of himself over to them, and this is, I say, one of the hidden things and mysteries that are freely given, God passeth over himself freely to us.

Secondly, God gives his Son Christ, as well as he gives himself, that is a second deed of gift, giving of his Son to men: This is frequently repeated, *To us a child is borne*, saith the Prophet, *Isai. 9. 6.* *To us a Sonne is given*. So in *Isaiah 42. 6.* the same Prophet tells what the Lord speakes of Christ: *I will give thee for a Covenant to the people, a light to the Gentiles, to open the blinde eyes*. Here is a giving of Christ, you see, as wee are the gift of the Father to Christ, so Christ is the gift of the Father to us.

Now, beloved, in the giving of Christ, there is to be considered, first, the gift of his person. Secondly, the gift of all the fruits that doe redound from the participation of his person. First God gives the person of Christ to men, as much as to say, God gives Christ to stand in the room

of men, and man stands in Christs room. So that in the giving of Christ, God is pleased, as it were, to make a change; Christ shall represent our person to the Father; wee shall represent the person of Christ to the Father. All the loveliness the person of Christ hath, that is put upon us, and we are lovely with the Father, even as the Sonne himself.

On the other part, all that hatefulnesse and loathsomnesse in our nature, is put upon Christ, hee stands as it were, the *abhorred* of the Father for the time, even the forsaken of the Father, as hee represented our persons, *bare our blame*, and sustained our wrath, and *dranke the dreggs of our cup*; Here is the gift of the person, that which is Christs, is ours; that which is ours, is Christs. There is an admirable expression in 2 Corinth. 5. last verse, *Hee was made sinne for us that knew no sinne, that wee might be made the righteousness of God in in him.* It is plainly manifested, that which wee were, Christ became, *since for us*; then that which Christ was, we became, that is, the righteousness of God; *For we are made the righteousness of God in him*, saith the Apostle.

Secondly, with Christ there is the gift of the fruit of this person of Christ; she that hath the husband, hath all that is the husbands. I have read an ancient deed of gift, made by one of the first Kings of England, giving all that is from the heavens to the center of the earth; so that if there be Mineralls in the bowells of the earth, they are comprehended in the gift: So it is with Christ, God in his Sonne, and with his Sonne, giveth all that the

Son hath, and is. All the mines in the bowels of Christ are ours; *All things are yours, for ye are Christs, and Christ is Gods*: So that what ever is Christs, by the gift of Christ, becomes the persons to whom Christ is given. Consider what you can imagine Christ hath as a fruit growing from him as he is Christ, with Christ that fruit is given to man, namely, to his own people; as free Justification from all sin; free reconciliation with the Father; free adoption to all the glory and liberty of the sons of God; firm peace and agreement without any more quarrelling between God and his people; a free use of all things in a sanctified away.

Finally, we cannot run upon these particulars at large. The third thing given of God is, *the spirit of God: he will give his spirit to them that aske it, saith the Text*; There is a deed of gift of the Spirit; *I will send you another Comforter, saith Christ, and he shall lead you into all truth.*

And as the Spirit of God, is the gift of God; so the knowledge of those gifts that are only known by the Spirit it self, is the gift of God, with this spirit, wisdom and understanding is given, and the knowledge of the mystery of the Gospel, that you shall not only have these things (spoken of before) given to you, but the knowledge of them all, the sound knowledge of them is as much the gift of God as the things themselves, the knowledge of these is by the Spirit of God, *Comfort* is given by the spirit, you shall never have rest in your spirits, but as the spirit of God, rocks you asleep, and gives you rest. In brief, as all things are given in Christ by his own purchase, so all things are given in Christ

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by the spirit ; by way of application and possession in particular. Let us therefore now consider (for I must now redeem the time) what it is for these (I might have mentioned other particulars that are given) to be given of God.

A deed of gift is opposed to two things First, to *Sale*. Secondly, to *Loane*. These things therefore are communicated by God. First, not by sale or bargain, God doth not play the Merchant, here is my wares, give me the price, take the commodity. Beloved, I beseech you take heed of such principles as these are ; the Covenant of Christ, as some imagine, runs upon this straine, I will be their God, and they shall be my people ; that is, I will tell you upon what terms I will be yours, come bring this price, deliver up your selves to me, and then I will be yours ; give me the price and take it : God is no such huckster, he drives no such bargains in giving of himselfe, and in giving of Christ, and his spirit. He makes no sale at all, for sale, and deed of gift are opposite. If I buy such a thing of a man, he doth not give it me. Beloved, you must not think to bring a price to God for those things you would have of God ; take heed of such conceits, that your assurance, and peace, and comfort must cost you dear before you have them : For God will take no cost nor price at your hands. Observe that admirable expression, in *Esay 55. 1, 2* ; by this you shall plainly perceive God is no huckster, God doth not keep shop, he doth not shew you wares, and ask a price of you before you have them. *Ho, you that thirst that is, have a mind ; come to the waters, come buy and eat ; buy Wine and*
Milke

Milke without money, and without price. Why, money, and price? Beloved, there is difference between money and price; namely, as there is difference between money and moneys worth. Your poore men their dayes labour is moneys worth, and their dayes labour is a price; therefore there is equality between the labour and the wages; as there is equivalence between the money and the thing bought. Now the meaning of the holy Ghost here is; God doth not look for money nor price, money nor labour, God doth not look that men should earn their gifts before they have them, God looks not for the penny, nor for the penies worth: Therefore be not deceived, though in respect of Christ, God did make a sale, and made him pay accordingly to the bargain; in which regard the Apostle saith, *wee are bought with a price*: yet in respect of us, I say, there is no sale at all.

Beloved, let me tell you, there are more *Simoniacall* persons in the World then men are aware of. In *Acts 18.* the great sin of *Simon Magus* was, that he thought the gift of the holy Ghost might be bought with money, the Apostle in that Chapter thunders out an execration against him, for offering to think or speak this, that the gift of the holy Ghost might be bought with money, and therefore he tells him plainly, that *hee was in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, and that hee had no part nor portion in that matter.* How neer they follow to the heels the steps of *Simon Magus*, that will bring their price in their hands to God, to partake of the gift of the holy Ghost, I leave it to the wise to judge.

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Therefore you that would have your part and portion in this matter of the gift of God, know, that it must cost you nothing. This derogateth not from your obedience; There is employment enough for you, and there are ends sufficient for this employment, though this obedience be not the price you are to bring, from whence you are to expect the gifts of God; God requires your obedience to glorifie him, to be the manifestation of your thankfulness, for the good of your brethren, for the manifesting and accomplishing his gifts in the use of ordinances; but that these should be a price, is a grosse mistake.

Do not dreame that your conscionable walking before God here, is the thing that must commend you to God hereafter, nothing but Jesus Christ sent out of the love and bowels of the Father, can possibly commend you to God, doe not thinke this or that you doe, is that price from whence you are to expect the things of God; but know, that the things of God, are given of God. I shall runne over some heads very briefly, for I see I am much prevented.

Secondly therefore, besides *sale*, Gods gifts are not a *loan* neither; this is a great consideration. The things that wee have of God, as they are a gift, so they are not loan; the things that we receive of God, they are not lent, there is the difference between lending and giving; hee that lends money, looks it should be paid againe; hee that gives money, it is given for ever to him that it is given to, without ever looking for it again. The things of God, as they are given, so God doth not look for them again.

You

You know it is a ridiculous thing *to give a thing, and to take the thing again*; wee count this childrens play. How many of Gods children in temptation look upon the things that God hath given them, and yet suspect God will take them away again? What is lent men may challenge againe; but when a man gives a thing, it is injustice for him to challenge it any more, there is this difference between lending and giving. If God gives things to men, and takes them againe, he relinquisheth and frustrateth his own act; for if hee takes them away, they were not given. A *Deed of gift*, and Title of land by Deed of gift, is as firme as a title to land by purchase: What God hath given, he cannot call it in againe. I speak this, beloved, to the consolation of trembling spirits; they look upon God bestowing of himself, and bestowing Christ and his Spirit, and they receive what God hath given, yet their spirits tremble, and they are afraid God will take these things away againe from them. They doe commit such and such sinnes; therefore surely, say they, I shall lose that I have.

Beloved, remember the nature of a gift, and remember this too, that what ever God hath given, he never calls it in again. Suppose a Father should deliver up, and give all his lands and goods to his Son, and make a reall Deed of gift in law, passing it over to him as firm as law can make it: this son peradventure commits some fault afterwards; can the Father call in this Deed of gift in respect of the fault committed? Thou art a son of God, and a darling of the living God: It may bee thou hast com-

committed many sins; for *in many things we sinne all.* Doth God call in his Deed? Is not this Deed of gift inrolled in the word of grace, and is it not upon record? This very enrolling is sufficient security to thee, thou canst not be dispossessed of it.

There are many thinke that the preaching of this gives way to licentiousnesse. I answered it fully the last time I was among you, *I beseech you by the mercies of God, present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God.* The consideration of the unchangeablenesse of the grace of God, and his love. There is no other means in the world to keep men from sinne but this stands firme for ever. As things are the gift of God, so they are unchangeable to them to whom they are given: And the Lord give you wisdom and understanding, and his Spirit, to hold fast a truth of such infinite concernment to the joy and peace of your spirits. And till you receive such unchangeable principles, whereupon the stability of your peace is founded: you will be like waves of the sea, tossed to and fro with every winde of temptation; you will have every little thing shall raise suspicions and jealousies in your spirits. But, beloved, *God is not as man, that hee should he, nor as the son of man, that he should repent; shall he say, and shall it not come to passe?* Numb 23. 19. Shall God assent to a thing, and how much more shall hee not make good that word that hee assents to? Certainly, when men doe give a thing, they will not take it away, seeing the thing is given: I say, the things of God are given, and the Lord cannot take them away, *The gates of hell shall not prevale against you.*

There

There are many things of usefull consideration, if time would give me leave to open them to you. *Thirdly, the things of God are not onely given, but they are freely given.* I must but touch upon the heads, there are these five things considerable in a free gift. I will but name them.

First, a *free gift*, is, when a thing is given without compulsion, a man doth not properly give his purse upon the high way, when thieves force him to it; things freely given, are not compulsory, but voluntary.

Secondly, things may be given, but may be given grudgingly, they may be given with a heart relucting against it, as many men give to the poor, to serve the necessity of the times, but it goes to their hearts to part with it; here is a gift, but it is not a free-gift, because the heart is not enlarged, here is not a ready heart; but God doth not give grudgingly, he loves a cheerfull giver, and doth so himself; For hee waites that hee may be gracious, Esa. 30. 18.

Thirdly, gift is free and free indeed, when a thing is given onely out of the motion in, and from a mans own spirit without any externall incentive; and provocation to put him upon such a gift: It is commendable I confesse, for a man to be perswaded by others to doe good: but the glory of free gifts stands in the freeness of a mans owne spirit without provocation; Know thus much in generall, all the things that we receive from God, there is no incentive, no provocation, no motive as the originall to stirre or provoke God to give the thing; let me tell you this, Christ himself is not the

the originall motive of the gift of God Christ is the instrument, or as the Scripture saith, the Mediator for our partaking of the gift of God, the love of God in himself is the first fountaine of all the gifts of God to us ; nay , the very fountaine of Christ himselfe , to compasse the fruition and enjoyment of these gifts , that the love of God himselfe had first framed , composed, and ordained for us : Much lesse then can any creature in the World have prevalency with God to stir up bowels in him , as if he needed be stirred up to do the good that he doth : That which he doth commeth from the motion of his own thoughts rising in himself, not being raised up by any thing without himselfe.

Fourthly, a gift is free , when it is bountifull, such a man is a free house-keeper, that is, he keeps a bountifull house : So the gifts of God are free in respect of his bounty , God doth not sow sparingly , but liberally , he giveth us freely to enjoy all things , there is plenteous redemption (saith the Text) with him , *Psalm. 130. 7.* There is abundance of satiety ; *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fardresse of thy house, they shall drinke of the Rivers of thy pleasure, Psalm. 46. 8.* Here is a free God, here is freenes indeed , in that he is a bountifull God, in all that hee bestowes upon the Sonnes of men : Hee fills the Cup to the brimme, pressed downe, heaped up , and running over, in this manner is the bounty of God expressed , *Hee saves to the uttermost all them that come to GOD by him, Hebrewes 7. 25.*

Fifthly and lastly , a free gift is a gift that is unconditi-

unconditionate, he doth not propose conditions before-hand, but gives his gifts without respect to any condition. Beloved, do not mistake; our Faith, our obedience is not the condition of Gods gifts. That in the Song of Zachariah is observable, *That he would grant us, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, wee might serve him without feare, in holinesse and righteousness before him all the dayes of our lives*; observe, This service without feare, in holinesse and righteousness all the dayes of our lives, is not the condition of deliverance, that we might partake of it; but here is first *deliverance*, and then *service* is the fruit of deliverance, not deliverance the fruit of service; God delivers and then we serve, and the tenour of the Gospel in this, is contrary to the tenour of the Law: The tenour of the Law runs thus, *first doe, then live*; the Gospel saith, *first live, then doe*: when thou wast in thy blood I said unto thee live, then washed I thee with water, then put I ornaments upon thee. Thus when you consider the frame of the Gospel runs thus, that there is nothing comes to men, but as the free gift of God, even Christ himself is so given; do not think that God doth give Christ upon condition.

Fourthly, what it is for men to know this gift of God; there is a two-fold knowledge in generall; first, a knowledge of the things; Secondly, a knowledge of propriety in the thing: so there is a two-fold knowledge of these things given; first, the knowledge of the things given; Secondly, the knowledge of propriety in the things given: the knowledge of the thing it selfe given is two-fold.

First;

First, *intellectuall* : Secondly, *practicall*. The *intellectuall* knowledge, is the naturall understanding of the thing in proper sence. Practicall knowledge is a sensible knowledge. You may distinguish them thus, as the knowledge man may have of the sweetnesse of Sugar in his understanding, and the knowledge of the sweetnesse of it in the tast. There is a great deal of difference between these two, for the things of *God* that are given, may be known intellectuallly in a common way, not only by the elect, for so the reprobate may in some measure know them also. But the people of *God* only know them practically, that is, they do receive by degrees the sweetnesse of them, and *God* doth give the tast of them more and more to them.

Secondly, there is besides the knowledge of the thing, the knowledge of propriety, which is this, when men know the things of God, and know them as their own. It is one thing for a person to know such a woman is a wise, a beautifull, a rich woman; and it is another to know that this wise, beautifull, and rich woman is my wife, that I have propriety in all shee is, and hath: And so it is one thing for a Woman to know a man, that he is a man of parts, that he is of wealth and honour, to know him that he is so, is one thing; and to know this man, that is thus wise, rich and honourable to be my husband, that is another thing; So it is in the knowledge of *spirituall things*, it is one thing to know *God* and *spirituall things*, another to know *God* by way of propriety, to know that *God* gives himselfe to me as mine; and so likewise of all the rest of these particulars that are given:

given; namely, concerning Christ and the Spirit, to know them with propriety to my selfe. Now all this comes by the Spirit of God, it comes not by the Spirit of the World, but by the Spirit that is of God. This I should have shewed more at large; but of this hereafter, because I fear I have already trespassed upon your patience.



SERMON XIII.

Reconciliation by Christ alone.

2 Cor. 5. 19. *To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himselfe, not imputing their trespasses unto them.*

His great Apostle of the Gentiles, Saint Paul I mean, although he did not first break the Ice, nor lay the first hand upon the wall of partition between Jewes and Gentiles, to pull it down, that they might become both one in one Christ; For Paul went before him, and was indeed the first in this businessse, though with a great deal of consternation and bitterneffe of spirit even from the rest of the Apostles themselves; who supposed that the glorious priviledges of Christ were to be confined only to the Nation of the Jewes, as you may perceive in Acts 8. and 9. Chapters, though Paul, who was not the first, yet as he himselfe speaks in the businessse of publishing the grace of God in Christ

to the Gentiles, Hee laboured more abundantly then they all. Of which labour of his, this chapter gives abundant testimony, especially in the beginning of the fourteenth verse of it; where hee gives the great occasion, or motive, why hee did preach Christ so cleerly and freely to the Gentiles. The love of Christ, saith the Apostle, constraines me: As if he should say, seeing that the glory of the grace of God hath so far extended it self, as that not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles may have a portion in him; its pittie that so much abundant grace, which serves to the magnifying of Christ so exceedingly, should be concealed: Christ hath done so much for me, thinks Paul, that it were an unworthy part in me to conceale that which should make so much unto his glory; the love wherewith he hath loved me, constraines mee to doe the utmost (that he might have all his praise) to manifest his glory.

Therefore having thus laid down the great motive that set him on worke to publish the Gospel, he takes up this resolution, He wil preach the Gospel, let it cost him what it will to doe it; as it is like to cost all that will be so exact in publishing the Gospel as Paul was: Yet the love of Christ did so constrain him, that he cannot keep it in, he must speak out this love of his. Thus hee comes to the businesse in the latter end of that fourteenth verse; If one died for all, then were all dead. His meaning is this; He puts the emphasie upon the word All, and that emphasie upon the word All, is not taken simply, but relatively and comparatively; If one died for all: As much as to say: It is not only

the Nation of the Jewes have part in the death of Christ, but all have a part in it : If Christ had an eye not onely upon the Jewes, but upon the Gentiles too in his death, *Then*, saith hee, *All were dead*, that is, *All* have a part in that death.

Now that the Apostle here doth mainly intend the setting forth of the largeness of Gods grace in Christ, extending not onely to the Jewes, but also to the Gentiles the sixteenth verse makes cleare : For, saith he there, *Henceforth know wee no man after the flesh ; yea, though wee have knowne Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know wee him so no more* : Give me leave to open the meaning of it ; For I must tell you, there is a great deale of mistake concerning the scope of the Apostle in these words, which makes the sense of the words so obscure in the reading thereof. The Apostle was once of the same minde that James and the rest were of, that Christ, as he did come of the flesh of Abraham, and so according to the flesh was of the kindred of all the Jewes : So they verily thought that the vertue of Christ, and redemption by Christ, had extended no further then to the flesh, that is, to the same flesh of which he came; they of the circumcision did chide Peter, that hee should offer to goe without the bounds of the Jewes, to preach the gospel to them, which they thought had no part in it. The Apostle he was of this minde once, but henceforth, saith hee, *know I no man after the flesh ; that is, I will never preach Christ after the flesh, as if none had share in Christ, but those that are of the kindred of which hee came ; nay, saith hee, Though I have knowne Christ thus after the flesh, yet*

forth know I him so no more : Where hee doth expound what he spake before, as if he should say, I thought Christ had had a mind to save none but the kindred of which hee came, I will know Christ thus no longer, I will preach the Gospel so no more, I will preach the Gospel no more to the Jewes then to the Gentiles. They that are not of the flesh of Christ, have as great a portion in Christ, as those that are of the flesh of Christ.

Hence hee begins to gather up his maine Doctrine which he would preach to the Gentiles, and that he brings in the 17. verse of that chapter, *If any man be in Christ, hee is a new creature* : where the Emphasis lies upon the words *any man*. If *any man* be in Christ, hee is a new creature : As if hee should say : This is the doctrine I will now preach to the world; not if the Jew be in Christ, hee is a new creature, but if *any man* in the world be in Christ, hee is a new creature. Every man in the world hath this priviledge as well as the Jewes. *If any man be in Christ, hee shall be a new creature as well as the Jewes.*

And because of some obscurity in this phrase, of a *New creature*, therefore in the eighteenth verse the Apostle doth expound his owne meaning, what hee doth intend in that phrase of a *New creature* : give mee leave to open this place to you : for I must tell you there are some great mistakes in this point. Most men thinke, that this phrase, *New Creature*, is a renewed sanctified man, so as hee becomes new in his owne conversation, when his life is changed; I doe not deny the truth of the thing, all that are in Christ,

Christ doth renew them, Christ doth sanctifie them, Christ doth subdue iniquity in them; but under favour let me tell you, the Apostles meaning here by *new creature* is, not that they are sanctified, but they are new creatures, that is, they are reconciled unto God. This is the Apostles meaning in this place. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;* that is, hee is brought into a new condition that he was not in before: and this new condition is, hee is now a reconciled person unto God, whereas before he was an alien and stranger to God.

Obj But, you will say, how will it appeare that the Apostel's *new creature* is a person reconciled, and considered as reconciled, and not as he is a sanctified person?

Ans I answer, this is cleer by the eighteenth verse of that chapter: *For* saith the Apostle, *all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* Marke well; The maine thing the Apostle drives at here, is to let the Corinthians know, and us with them, what the main ministry was which Christ had committed unto them; the main ministry it seems was this, to publish, that *if any man be in Christ, hee is a new creature.* What is that? This it is, namely, that God, from whom all things are, hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ. This was the Ministry which was committed unto them.

Now, beloved, if the Apostle had spoken here of Sanctification, he would have said that the ministry committed unto him, with the rest, was a ministry of sanctification, as well as reconciliation:

but

but the Ministry God committed to him here was this, God reconciling men to himselfe by Jesus Christ; so that the being a new creature here, which was the Ministry committed to the Apostle, is reconciliation with God by Jesus Christ.

Now in the nineteenth vers. the Text that I have read unto you, the Apostle begins anew to explain more particularly, what this Ministry is that the Lord hath committed unto him, *so wit* faith he, *that God was in Christ, reconciling the World unto himselfe, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* And therefore in the next verse, you shall find, the Apostle makes this so essentiall a businesse to the Ministry of the Gospel, that he calls himself and the rest Embassadors, and Embassadors for this very purpose; namely in Christs stead, to beseech people that they would be reconciled unto God: and then in the closure of the Chapter, the Apostle tells them what the fruits of this reconciliation are, and by what meanes we come to partake of this reconciliation: *He was made sin for us that knew no sin, that wee might be made the righteousness of God in him.* From which words I might observe to you, as they have reference to the coherence:

First, what the great and maine businesse of us that professe our selves to be the Ministers of Christ ought to be in the World with men; It is to be lamented I confesse, and I would to God there were no occasion to speak of it, whilst we professe our selves to be the Embassadors of Christ, to dispatch this great businesse, to beseech men in Christs stead to be reconciled unto God:

we are too much the Ministers of *Moses* pressing and thundering the Wrath of God from Heaven, publishing unto men the working out of their own salvation by their own works according to the Law, putting upon them the performance of duties in every particular, that they may have peace and joy of spirit from it, telling them, that they must make their peace with God by Fasting, and Prayer, and mourning. Is this to beseech men in Christs stead to be reconciled unto God by Christ alone. This is the Embassage of the Ministers of the Gospel, and whoever he be that forsakes this message, he goes, and is not sent, he takes upon him to manage a businesse out of his commission : For the commission is, That we in Christs stead should beseech men to be reconciled unto God, and that by the blood of Christ alone.

Secondly, I might note a thing, Beloved, which peradventure puzzles the heads of many people, how you may understand those many Texts of Scripture that speake so largely of the Death of Christ in respect of the extent of it, he died not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole World : and so in the 14. vers. here, *If one died for all, then were all dead*. From whence we may collect the universality of redemption unto all particular persons in the World ; but from this coherence you may plainly perceive, that the Apostles maine drift is not, that every particular person partakes of reconciliation by Christ, he doth not speake in respect of every particular, but in opposition to the jewes : As if he should say, You mistake
your

your selves you that are of the Jewes, that boast of Christ, as if there were no Christ but in your selves, No, saith he, you are mistaken, he goes beyond you, he goes over all the World. And when Saint *Iohn* saith, in his first Epistle, second Chapter, and second verse, *And not for our sinnes onely, but for the sinnes of the whole World*; he doth not say *ours* in reference to *believers*, but he saith *ours*, as he was naturally of the stock of *Abraham*, when he saith, not for our sinnes only, but for the sins of the whole World, he doth not oppose the World unto the elect; but he opposeth the World of the elect unto the *Jewes*; and his meaning is, All the World hath a part in Christ, and in every corner of the World there is a portion of Christ, as well as there is in us, who are of the seed of *Abraham*. And therefore the Apostle, in *Romans* 4.13. saith expressly, *That the promise is not made to Abraham, and to his seed after the Flesh, but to his seed after the spirit, that walke in the faith of Abraham*. By this you may be able to resolve those manifold difficulties that do arise from the universality of the tender of grace by Christ unto the World. I say, is opposed only to the narrow confines of the *Jewes*, and the World includes not particular persons. But this is not that I mainly drive at for the present.

I come to the text it self. The substance, the main Ministry of the Apostle stands in this, that God is in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. In which you may observe with me.

First, the great grace, that living, lively and heart-

heart-reviving grace the Apostle brings to light, and commends to the comforting of the hearts of Gods people, and that is *reconciliation* with God.

Secondly, note here the originall authour, or efficient of this reconciliation and grace, that is, God himself, *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himselfe.*

Thirdly, note here the maine meanes by which this reconciliation is composed and effected, and that is Christ himself alone, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himselfe.*

Fourthly, note this, the time when this *reconciliation* was made between God and persons in particular. The Apostle himself, although he lived so many years before us, he speaks of it as a thing already past, he doth not say, God is reconciling, or God will be reconciling, but he speaks in the preterperfect tense, *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himselfe*, it is a thing long before finished perfectly to our hands, that we may, when God hath given us eyes to behold it, see it as a thing already done, and perfected long before, and not now perfecting, much lesse now to be begun.

Fifthly, we may note the persons with whom God in Christ is reconciled, and that is *the world*: *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himselfe.*

The principall thing I mean to drive at, is, the consideration of the great grace that the Apostle brings here to light, and that is, reconciliation with God; *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himselfe.*

Quest. What is it, will you say, for God to be reconciled to persons?

Ans.

Ans. For the clearing of this, first note, something is to be premised as a necessary antecedent that goeth before reconciliation it selfe. Unto reconciliation of necessity there must be supposed something to be done by us, occasioning a breach between God and us, administering such just cause of distast, and of offence, as not onely caused God to separate himselfe as farre off from men, but also to prepare wrath & vengeance. Where ever there is reconciliation, it is supposed there was a breach made, and upon the breach made, a bringing the persons thus at distance and difference by a breach to become one again.

And therefore beloved, you must know, there is no person under heaven reconciled unto God, but as the person is, or was considered a person walking contrary unto God; and that this contrary walking unto him, hath occasioned a breach between God and him: And therefore you shall find when the Apostle speakes of our being reconciled unto God, hee brings still in this clause, that there was estrangement and distance, before such union and reconcilement: As in the second chapter to the Ephesians, and 13. verse, you shall finde how the Apostle doth bring in this previous consideration: *You*, saith hee, *who were sometime as farre off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* This making nigh, or bringing together, is the reconciliation that is made with God; and the persons that are thus made nigh, before their bringing nigh, are said to be as farre off: As much as to say, there is that contrariety betweene God and man naturally, that puts man as farre off from God, and

and makes him remote, *He beholds the wicked as farre off*, saith the Psalmist, *Psalm 138. 6.* God keeps at a distance with men, when they walke in a way giving distaste and offence unto him: And it is the businesse of Christ to bring them nigh again; those that were thus sometimes as farre off. But the Apostle speaks more plainly in the Epistle to the *Colossians*, 1. 21, 22. *You, saith hee, that were sometimes alienated, or estranged, that is to say, from God, and enemies in your minds through wicked works, but hee now reconciled.* Where the Apostle doth not onely shew there is a remote distance, and a kind of estrangement between God and persons, before reconciliation; but he doth deliver the true proper ground from whence this alienation doth proceed: *Who were alienated in your mindes by reason of wicked works*: our wicked works are they that cause alienation and estrangement from God: And, saith the Apostle, *you who were thus sometimes alienated, are reconciled by Christ.* And therefore, beloved, know, this must be laid down as a certain position, and be received of persons, that in respect of themselves they are alienated and estranged persons, and the wickednesse of their wayes is that which causeth that alienation, and estrangement, and separation from God.

Obj. But some it may be will object, was there ever a time that God was alienated and estranged as an enemy to those people of his, with whom hee is now reconciled? Some will say, God loves his people with an everlasting love, and hee never looks upon his people, but with a look of love, and with a look of union.

Ans.

Ans. For Answer to this, give me leave to cleare a mystery unto you, this seems to bee a kind of *Paradox*, that God should from all eternity looke with eyes of love upon his people, and yet there should bee a time in which there should be an alienation or enmity between God and them. For the reconciliation of this difference, you must know, it is one thing for God to recollect all future things that should come in all the severall times of the World, into one thought of his own; And it is another thing for these things to come to passe in their severall times, according to their own nature; you must know its true, that in Gods eternall thoughts, in the thoughts of God from everlasting are summed up, according to the infinite vastnesse of his own comprehension, he did summe up from first to last, all the occurrences and passages which in succession of time should come to passe: As for example, Hee had at once in his eye, man in his innocency, man in his fall, and man in his restauration againe by Christ; He had in his eye man committing sinne against him from time to time; and at the same instant, had in his eye Christ dying for these sinnes of men, and so satisfying his owne Justice for their transgressions: Now because God had al things at once in his eye, which in respect of their actuall being, are in succession of time: Therefore it comes to passe, that God from all eternity had everlasting love unto his owne people, though in time they doe those actions which in their owne nature are enmity against God. For example, you, and I are, it may be, this moment committing some
sin,

sin, which is enmity to the nature of God; that sin simply considered in its owne nature, hath an estrangement in it, to separate betweene you and me, and God: But though its true, that sin committed hath in its own nature a power of separating; yet as God from all eternity had the present sins wee now commit in his eye, and at the same moment had the satisfaction in his eye; from hence it comesto passe, there was not a time in which God actually stood at enmity with our persons: but in respect of the nature of things comming successively to passe; mans condition may be considered as a condition of enmity, and againe it may be considered as a condition of reconciliation to God: That you and I were born in sin is true, and that this our being borne in sin was a state of enmity against God, is as true: That in the fulnesse of time Christ came into the world, and then actually did beare the sins of you and mee, by which God became reconciled unto us againe, is also most certainly true: There is a great distance of time between sinne committed, and that satisfaction actually made; but in respect of Gods eye looking upon all things at once, there is no distance of time betweene that enmity sinne did produce; and that reconciliation that the blood of Christ hath wrought, to take away this enmity: I hope, beloved, though this be a high myserie, yet it will be cleare to persons that will but take into consideration, that difference between Gods own simple act, of comprising of all the sins of the world at once: I meane that infinite act of God in that infinite comprehension of his, and consider

der the difference between that infinite act of *God* and the succession of things in their own time and nature ; this being supposed, that persons actually do that which is enmity, and that which makes a difference and separation.

Reconciliation it self briefly stands in this, namely that whatever breach there was, or was occasioned by any act of man, in reconciliation all these breaches are quite made up, and taken away : When *God* is reconciled to persons, he hath no more quarrell with, nor controversie against those persons with whom he is reconciled. Though thou do this day and yesterday, though thou to morrow, and the next day dost commit a sinne, which in its own nature is enmity, and may occasion a breach between *God* and thee ; yet I say, if *God* be once reconciled, all whatever administers any quarrell or controversie between *God* and thee is absolutely taken up : *God* hath no more to object against thee, or hit thee in the teeth withall : Understand I beseech you beloved the nature of Reconciliation, and first you shall find there is more in it then usually is apprehended. You know as long as men stomach one another, and as often as they have occasion, are a quarrelling one with another, all this while these persons are not reconciled persons indeed, though peradventure there may be some complementall shaking of hands, if still there be snarling one at another, and stomacking one another, these persons are not reconciled. So I say, is *God* a quarrelling with thy spirit ? Is *God* still hitting thee in thy teeth, with such and such sins, thou committest against him ? is the
bitternesse

bitternesse of God poured upon thee, is the wrath of God revealed against thee; I say, if there be this wrath of God at any time truly revealed against thee, there is not yet a reconciliation of God towards thee: In Reconciliation; there is no old grudgings, and quarrellings, and controversies; there is no hearing of them any more; in Reconciliation there is forgiving and forgetting, as you use to say, and all this what ever it is with men, its thus with God: where ever God is reconciled, he doth forgive and forget for ever.

Therefore you shall find when the Lord speaks of Reconciliation in the Covenant, he saith, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*. Here is the drawing and making a person one with himselfe; *And your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more*; follows it. I beseech you observe it well, there is a great deale of matter in this expression, and this will give you rest if ever you have rest. Either you must deny God is reconciled, or you must conclude God hath forgiven your transgressions, *and he will remember your sins no more*.

It may be you feelee much corruption venting it self: Though you aet this and that transgression at this time; if God be reconciled to you, he doth not remember your sins you now commit: *your sins*, marke it well, because I know it goes harsh to men, and contrary to sence and reason; yet it must be true, because the Lord hath spoken it; *Your finnes and your iniquities I will remember no more*. You will say, When? I answer, when God is entered into covenant with a people; *And this shall bee the Covenant I will make in those dayes, saith the Lord, I will*

I will (sprinkle you with clean water, and your sins and iniquities I will remember no more.

Obje^t. How can this be, you will say, is God grown so forgetfull, that he takes no notice, that at this instant I sin, at this time I sin, and cannot God remember I do sin? This seems a mighty strong argument.

Ans. Now suppose I could not answer this; Is this a truth that God saith, or no, *Your finnes and your iniquities I will remember no more?* If this be not a truth, then the Word of God is untrue, and then farewell all the ground upon which a person ought to build; But let God be true, and every man a liar: therefore to clear it I say, God doth remember, and know well enough that we do act this; his meaning then is, I will remember them no more, to hit you in the teeth with them; I will have no more to say to you for their transgressions you do now commit. For all that I have to say against iniquity, against this present iniquity committed, all that God hath to say, he hath said it over to Christ already, when he was upon the Crosse; and this sin now committed, was then in the remembrance of God; He took the full Payment for this sin now committed, and that sin that shall be committed to morrow, unto the end of the World, he took all the payment of Christ: Therefore he will never repeat them over to you. This is Gods way, not to hit his people in covenant in the teeth, nor upbraide them with any sin they do commit. This is plain in the latter end of the Text; *and was in Christ reconciling the World unto himselfe, and imputing their trespasses unto them.* As if hee had

had said, I will never call you to an account for the sins you commit, I will never tax you for the sins you do commit, you shall be in mine Eyes as if you did not sin; all that I mean to ask, I have it already, at the hands of my Son; I have beheld the travell of his soule, *Eesai. 53. 11.* and am satisfied with the beholding of that travell. In *Eesai. 27.* 4. you have a notable expression, *fury is not in mee*, saith God. You will say, how can that be? Is not God angry? Doth not God poure out his wrath and vengeance? Doth not his fury burne against sin? The Prophet speaks in the name of God in that place: *fury is not in mee*: But if you will read the passage well, observe it, and you shall find of what time the Lord doth speak this: He speaks not of the present time, but of a certain time, that he prophesieth of. The Lord hath a vineyard, He watcheth over it and waters it night and day; and this vineyard shall enlarge its borders, and shall spread it self over all the World. The meaning then is this: There is a time to come, wherein the people of the Lord, the vine of the Lord shall go over, and spread it selfe, not in the Garden of *Eden* only, but all the World over; that is, the *Gentiles* shall be received into fellowship and communion with God, as well as the Jewes. Christ shall come and pull downe the wall of partition, and the Gospel of Christ shall be preached all the World over: Then, *Fury shall not bee in mee*, when Christ hath offered up himself, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified: Then the Lord hath no more fury to poure out upon such as are in him. When your reconciliation is made

with

with God, know from the first time of your reconciliation till your last breath, there shall not be the least fury in God to you: For his fury is poured out upon Christ already, and there is not one drop of that poyson to be poured out upon you. In *E/s*. 54.9. There is a most admirable place, *I have sworne (saith the Lord) as the waters of Noah shall no more goe over the earth, so have I sworne that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee any more.* What, God not be wroth with, not so much as rebuke persons? Yea, so saith the Lord, *I will not be wroth, I have sworn unto thee, as the waters of Noah:* You know the Lord made a Covenant; that there should never come a Flood to drown the world any more: This Covenant is as firme, that the water shall drown all the world againe, before God will be wroth with his people any more: When is this? Look into the beginning of the chapter, and you shall see, when the Jewes shall inherit the Gentiles, then it shall be.

Obj. But you will say, the Lord in that chapter saith, *For a little moment have I hid my face;* in a little wroth I hid it, verse 8 and therefore it seemes God was wroth and angry, then when hee said hee would not be wroth; and with the same people.

Ans. But marke it well, There is a great mistake, as if the Lord spake all in that chapter to the same people: the Lord distinguisheth between his present dealing with them, and his dealing with his people afterwards, when the Gentiles shall come into his fold. Indeed its true, the Lord saith hee forsook this Church as the wife of his youth, *But*

with everlasting kindnesse will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord ; There was a time in which the Lord was wroth and did hide his face ; but there is a time when the Lord will not only be kinde , but will have mercy with everlasting kindnesse ; that is , a kindnesse that hath no intervenings of wrath mixed , but a kindnesse that holds out , and an everlasting love ; and this mercy without any wrath between , this should be when the people of the *Jewes* should inherit the *Gentiles* , when the fulnesse of the *Gentiles* shall come in by Christ , taking away the wall of partition.

In brieft , know this as a certaine truth , God once reconciled is reconciled for ever : God is not such a changeling , as to be reconciled to day , and fall out to morrow againe . God when he is once become friends with a man , he is friends with him for ever , nothing shall break squares between God and that person .

Again , beloved , consider by what means this reconciliation is wrought , and then it will be manifested unto you that God cannot be angry , its by Christ ; *God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himselfe* . Beloved I ask this question , did Christ fully satisfie the indignation of God , or did he satisfie it only in part , leaving some remainders of indignation for the Creature to come after and beare ? If Christ did not fully satisfie indignation ; Christ is but a piece of a Saviour , Christ did not save to the utmost , he should be no perfect Saviour , if he did not satisfie the wrath of God to the uttermost : but if Christ did fully satisfie as God himselfe beh'd the travell of his

soule

soul, and was satisfied; then all indignation is past: Look as it is with men that are to make accounts; suppose a man should account for a hundred severall summes, these accounts are not satisfied, except he satisfy and pay for every summe: If hee pay ninety nine sums, and leaves but one unpaid, the creditor is not satisfied. Either Christ hath paid all, or some must come after to pay the rest; certainly indignation never ceases till there be satisfaction; either God hath satisfaction perfectly in Christ, or a beleever must pay the remainder; either God hath the full of Christ, or a beleever must satisfy himself. Suppose that Christ had satisfied Gods indignation for all sinne, but one; and a beleever must satisfy for that one; that one is enough to damne him for ever, for hee cannot give satisfaction for one sinne.

If Christ have satisfied for all, and have taken away the whole indignation; how can God come and poure out new indignation?

And to conclude, know this, that this perfect reconciliation, this peace with God is not a thing now to be agitated, and controverted in heaven; as if there were an act of Parliament now in hand, in hope it will passe, which must have some feare with it, lest it should miscarry: But God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself; Let me tell you, whoever you are that can claim a part in Christ, your reconciliation is finished to your hands; Christ is not now making reconciliation in heaven for you, *hee was in Christ reconciling the world to himself*: It is not in reconciling the thing is finished, your reconciliation is

compleat, God hath past it not onely by vote and consent in heaven; but he hath past it upon record under his hand in the ministry of the Gospel; Wee doe hold out to you, *reconciliation done*; wee doe not hold forth reconciliation, as doing, or to be done with him, but it is done with him: If you doe but close with it, the thing is finished for you.



SERMON XIV.

Christs free welcom to all commers.

Joh. 6. 37. *And him that cometh unto mee, I will in no wise cast out, or cast off.*

Hey are the words of our Saviour,
 The occasion was this; Our Saviour
 T having not onely a naturall sympathy
 and compassion, but also being a spirituall *Physician*, disperses abroad these common mercies in an extraordinary manner: In the former chapter he is plentiful in healing the sick, and curing many diseases; the very *Naturalists* being sensible of such kindneses, they flocke mightily after him in this chapter. And though Christ knew well enough what they were; as you shall see by and by; yet he shut not the bowells of compassion from them in extremity, there were many ready to faint; now rather then they should want supply, he would work another miracle, and with

a few loaves and fishes satisfie thousands of them, and so he doth. This people finding good cheere they are like dogges, can scarce leave the house, (bear with the expression) for they were no better, for all their flocking to Christ, I say, they were so eager to follow Christ, no ground should hold them, Christ takes ship, and goes over sea to *Caper-naum*, no country is too cold for them; nay, the sea it self shall not part Christ and them, after him they will.

Well, they come to him, and because hee had been so kind to feed them, they think they may be familiar with him; and therefore about the 16. verse, after their carnall fashion, they begin to put questions unto him, I say, in a fleshly way, in a low fashion they begin to argue with him, *how hee come there*, such poor silly stuffe they object to him. Well, though Christ had naturall compassion, yet he will not sooth them up in their folly and simplicity, but deales roundly with them, and tells them plainly, They were mistaken in him, if they thought his excellency did stand in working miracles for food, for bread: hee came on a higher errand, and a businesse of greater consequence, and therefore tells them plainly, it was another businesse hee comes about, their thoughts must arise higher then the loaves, *Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternall life*, Hee comes about eternall life, hee brings that which might produce eternall life to them; and therefore counsell them to looke after that: Well, because they are in talk, they hold it on, though to little purpose, and

put another question to Christ: *What shall wee doe, that wee may worke the workes of God?* Naturally men are upon doing to get it, when we talk of matters of Religion, it is doing gets every thing. Therefore they will be doing, that they may have something. Now though Christ doth not answer the question they made, being a silly one, yet he gives them another answer that may be to the purpose; *That is the worke of God, to believe in him the Father bath sent.* Never look to get it by doing, look to get it from him, and not from your selves and your own doings.

When Christ had made that answer, they began to be a little angry with him, and to put a cavilling question, or a question by way of exception against him; *What signe shewest thou (say they) that wee may see and believe? Moses gave us this Bread from Heaven,* speaking of Manna. What doth Christ tell them of life that he brings? What is he better then *Moses*? Will he give better Bread then Manna was? Well, Christ for all their heat and passion, and peevishnesse, he will answer them again; *Moses did not give you that Bread from Heaven.* And again, *Your Fathers did eat manna and are dead.* Here he takes them off from their great Rabbi whom they mentioned as if he were their Christ; And he takes them off also from their objection, saying, that the *Manna* they did eat, it was but satisfactory for a time, there was no life in it; they that did eat it are dead: And therefore he comes to make application, and to shew wherein he excelled *Moses*, and wherein that Bread he brings, exceeds *Manna*, v. 35. *Hee that comes to mee shall not hunger,*

hunger, and hee that beleeves in mee shall not thirst. They did eat Manna and yet were empty for all that : they drank of the Rock Moses smote, and yet they were athirst again; But he that comes to mee shall not hunger. I have so much as shall satisfie, there shall be no lack at all.

After Christ had made this discourse, he begins to deale plainly with them indeed, and tells them, though *they had seene, yet they believed not* : It may be some discouragement to men that labour in the Vineyard of the Lord, to see small fruit of their labours. But here you see Christ himselfe took a great deal of pains with these men, and all to little purpose, or rather no purpose at all : Therefore in the beginning of the 37. vers. Christ comforts himself against that common discomfort ; which was, though these men do not believe ; yet, *Altho the Father hath given me, they will come to me ; I shall have all that I expect, I never look for more then the Father gives me ; and of those that the Father gives, I shall lose none : and then afterwards in the words of the Text, he comforts those that do come ; These would not come, he leaves them, and calls to consolation for his people that do come : Hee that comes to mee I will in no wise cast him out.*

The Doctrine the words afford will be natural, it shall not vary a jot from the very words of the holy Ghost, *Hee that comes to Christ, hee will in no wise cast him out* : Mark it well beloved, there is abundance of life in it, to those whose Eyes the Lord will be pleased to open, to behold the fulnesse of safety in it, I say, he that comes to Christ

Christ, it is no matter who nor what he be, there is nothing in the world, there is nothing can be considered as an hinderance in that person comming; if he do but come, he may be certain of this, he shall in no wise be cast out; there is no person under heaven, be he as vile as can possibly be imagined; who, if he do but come to Christ, even while he is so, shall be rejected of Christ, or have a repulse. Beloved, I desire the Doctrine it selfe may be printed and stamped in your spirits.

Give me leave to speak a few words in generall before I come to particulars: I know, I may speak that which will be offensive to some, but I must speak the truth of the Lord, whatever men say: I say, whatever thou art in this congregation, suppose, a drunkard, a whoremaster, suppose a swearer, a blasphemor, and a persecuter, a mad man in iniquity, couldst thou but come to Iesus Christ, I say, come, only come, it is no matter though there be no alteration in the world in thee, in that instant when thou dost come; I say, at that instant, though thou be thus vile, as can be imagined, come to Christ, he is untrue, if he put thee out, *in no wise*, saith he, *will I cast them out, if they come to me.*

There are two sorts of people in the world that are given by the Father to Christ, who yet for the present do not actually come to him.

First, there are a sort of men in the world elected indeed, but for the present, are like wilde Asses upon the mountaines, snuffing up the wind; and as desperate in iniquity, as the veriest reprobate under heaven; and yet there shall not be rejection for these persons when they come; I say, whensoever they

they come, though as sinfull as their skins can hold, yet when they come to Christ, they shall not be cast out; for the present indeed, they dispise their birth-right, they scorne the grace of God, and cast it at their heels.

But there are a second sort of people given by God to Christ, that have not received Christ, and are not actually come to him; and yet for the present are wrought upon to be a willing people in some sort; that is, the Lord hath dealt thus far with them, faine they would close with Christ, that faine they would conclude an interest and portion of theirs in Christ: Oh, it would be welcome to them, it would be life to them, to bee certainly satisfied, that his blood is their ransome, and that their sinnes are blotted out thereby; I say, faine they would, but they dare not yet close with Christ for their lives: They dare not set up their rest here, they dare not sit downe with any such conclusion; but still there is something or other, that remaines, that must be removed out of the way, before they can make this certaine conclusion, *Christ is their Christ*: Now my principall errand is, at this time, to this latter sort of people; a people, I say, whose hearts tell them; If it could appeare clearly that without danger to them, they may say, Christ is their salvation, and sit down with this; if they could be satisfied with it, rather then their lives they would have Jesus Christ, but they dare not: Something or other is wanting, they dare not lay hold upon Jesus Christ, and it is presumption for them to sit down satisfied, *Christ is their Christ*: This is the generation I am at present to deale with.

withall, and to declare by the power of *I E S U S* Christ, the cleare mind of Christ to such persons, and by that power to plucke such persons out of the mire, wherein for the present they stick fast.

And that I may the better come upon the spirits of such laden persons, let us consider these three things.

First, what this *comming* to Christ is, that is here spoken of.

Secondly, what Christs purpose is in proposing this *comming* to him.

Thirdly, what Christ doth meane by this expression of his, *I will in no wise cast him out*. I shall speak briefly of the two former, because the life of Christs purpose lies in the last of these particulars.

First, what Christ doth meane by *comming* unto him? In the thirty fifth verse of this chapter, Christ will give you his minde himselfe: *Hee that comes unto me, shall not hunger, and he that believes in me shall not thirst*: mark it well, Beloved, hee makes *comming* and *believing* in sence all one. For if you observe it, such as Christ deales withall, they are unsatisfied and empty ones, now he satisfies the empty; and whose emptinesse will he fill? even of those that beleeve in him, that come to him. *Believing* and *comming* therefore are all one, so that to come to Christ is to believe in Christ. But wee are as far to seek as we were, you will say: what is that believing on Christ? In *Joh. 1. 12*. you shall see what it is to believe on him: *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sennes of God, even to them that believe on his name*.

Here

Here he makes *receiving* and *believing* all one, as before he made *comming* and *believing* all one. The sum in brief is this, the *comming* to Christ, is no more but the receiving of Christ for shelter and succour. A man is said to come to a strong hold, when he enters into it for his security and safety: He doth not stand backing and hammering, shal I, or shall I not; but danger forces him, and in he gets the door being open, and comes to his strong hold: So a person comes to Christ, Christ opening, he slips in, and ventures himself with him, and casts himself into his Arms, and he wil sink or swim with him.

Beloved, who ever you are, that can but come to him, be what you wil be, or may be, I say, if you come to him to venture your selves upon the Rock Christ, to sink or swim, as Christ wil support or sink under you, counting him a refuge to have him for your succour; *in no wise will hee cast you out.*

But *Secondly*, to what purpose doth Christ propose *comming* here, will some say? Beloved, I propound this the rather, because I conceive men mistake the mind of Christ concerning this *comming*. You must not imagine that our motion of *comming* is the *primum mobile* that gives motion to Christ to open and entertain, as if our *comming* did stir up Christ to set open, and to give entrance: Christ hath not any such thought in him, that we must come; and therefore Christ will own us for his own; for it is certainly true, the very motion of our coming to Christ, is from Christ himself, & from *Christs comming to us*, before we do so much as move.

It

It is a common principle knowne to all Divines, and most people. Wee are first acted, and then we doe act, *Acti agimus*. First, Christ gives to us to come, and then by his gift wee doe come to him; wee must not imagine, by comming to Christ, Christ is moved and invited towards us, and is stirred up to open to us, and give entertainment to us; but Christ first comming to us, and living in us, stirres us up to motion; *For that were dead in sinnes and trespasses (Ephes. 2. 1.) hath bee quickned*. Beloved, is there death till Christ doth quicken? Where then can there be this motion of ours, before Christ himself be come with his life? Where there is no life, you know there is no motion; and till the fountaine of life doth communicate life, there can be no life. Therefore it is Christ that gives this comming unto men; and this Christ having given it, they doe come to him.

Quest. But what is the purpose of Christ then, in speaking of comming here, as if this were a preparation, or a previous condition, that there is no portion in Christ, till there be first *comming*?

Ans. I answer, mark the scope well, you shall find Christ doth not intend a necessary condition, but he intends the removall of all objections: He doth not intend to put us on doing to get him, but he intends to take away all obstacles that may hinder us from comming to him; And the Emphasis of the Text doth not lie upon *comming*, but upon this, *In no wise will I cast them off*: As if hee had said, You are poore wretches; you think I am so hard-hearted, I will cast you off, you are so sinfull: but

but let this not trouble you, what ever *sinfulnesse* you have, that in common apprehension may hinder me from receiving you, *convinving to me*, for all this *I will not cast you out* when you come. It is one thing for a man to say to a poore man, come to my house, I will give you something; he proposeth no conditions, but he proposeth grace to him, Come to my house and you shall have something, I will give you this and that.

But I will come to the Third, the main thing I intend at this time, namely, what Christ intends when he saith, *I will in no wise cast you out*. Oh the depth and unsearchable grace that is comprehended in these few words! If it might shine with its own brightnesse to your spirits, how would you go away leaping and rejoycing with joy unspeakable and glorious? Why, the Lord is able to communicate to you, beloved, above all we are able to ask or think, *I will in no wise cast you out*: do but come, and nothing I say, nothing shall stand between me, and you, to put a bar to hinder an enterance to me.

There are two estates whereto this grace mentioned may belong; either that estate wherein is the breaking forth of the first light to the soule, or that estate after light is broken forth, but darknesse seems to come againe in the place of it, and this passage of Christ hath reference to both these estates.

First, of the first estate wherein light begins first to break out, the first dawning of the light of Christ: To give you some instance a little, and so to bring the businesse close. Suppose a person, as the

the Apostle doth suppose, in Ephes. 2. 2. You who were dead in trespasses and finnes hath bee quickned, wherein in times past yee walked, according to the course of this World, according to the Prince of the power of the ayre, that now rules in the children of disobedience. I say, suppose a person to be in the worst condition you can imagine, single out the vilest person in the World the notablest Drunkard that ever breathed, the greatest Whore-master, and the lewdest person that can be imagined; such a person as this, and this man continuing to this very instant, now before the Lord, as he was before without any change and alteration in the World untill this time: Suppose such a person; by this Text it appeares so manifest that if the Lord do but grant, and if the Lord hath but put a Willingnesse and readinesse of spirit into this man, that Christ he would have, if it might appeare he might have him: If his heart do but say, I would have him, all that sinfulness though to this instant continued in, is no bar in the World, but this man may claime his portion in Christ, and have as certaine security, that his portion is theirs, as any other man may have; marke well I say this passage, *I will in no wise cast him out*: Our Saviour doth plainly import that there neither is, or can be devised, no not by God himself, any one consideration whatsoever, which might occasion him to put off, or say nay, to any person that doth come: No consideration in the World, I say, can so aggravate a mans condition; could he make his condition as bad as the Devils themselves; yet if there be a comming to Christ, there can be no consideration in the highest pitch of sinfulness

ness for Christ to reject, or put by a person coming to him: For you must know beloved, Christ is well acquainted with all the objections the heart of man, nay, the Devill can object against the freeness of his grace, and life by him; to save a labour therefore, in this one passage, *I will in no wise cast out*, Christ at once answers all the objections that could be made: And I dare be bold to maintain in the name and stead of Christ, let a person but say, and lay downe this but for granted, come he would, Christ he would have rather then his life; let this be granted for a truth, I will be bold with Christ out of this passage to answer ten thousand objections, even fully to the silencing of every objection that can be made, *I will in no wise cast him out*; that is, I will upon no consideration that can be imagined and conceived. I know beloved, the objections are many, and they seem to be very strong, in respect of such a person, that the Lord hath given a willingnes and desire of their spirits to close with Christ, and yet dare not do the thing; I say, the objections are many and very strong, but let them be what they will be, you shall see by and by they come to no value in the world, there's no strength in them; let me tel you, the Lord hath sent me at this time to proclaim liberty to such as are in this sad, bitter & to their thinking desperate condition: Liberty God hath given thee, if thou wilt come freely; nothing in the world shall hinder thee. But let us consider the objections that may be made, and therein see what our poore sinners may have to forsake their mercy, and so become their own tormenters.

Obj.^t I dare not close with Christ, saith many a poore soule, if I sit down and close with Christ, being satisfied with this argument, Christ offers himselfe to sinners, this is presumption; why so? I am the filthiest Creature that ever breathed, I should stink above ground with my sins, if you knew what creature I am, and what an ungodly sinner I am; I am a Blasphemer, I do nothing but blaspheme the God of heaven; and I blaspheme his word to perfection, my spirit is mad against the Gospel it selfe.

Ans^w. In a word Beloved, reckon up all you can imagine, suppose the worst you can conceive, suppose the truth of the worst you conceive, that you have not belyed your selves a jot, in proposing the abominable filthinesse and lothsome basenesse of your filthy condition; suppose this be imagined. What of this? Surely, as long as I am in this case Christ cannot belong to me, there is no comming to Christ. Beloved, if this be truth that you say, that such and such filthinesse stands between Christ and you, that though you come there could be no entertainment with Christ for you, supposing this to be true, this that Christ speakes is most certainly false, for saith Christ, *I will in no wise cast you off*: That is upon no consideration will I cast you off. You say upon this consideration. I am so abominably vile there will be casting off: If this you say be true, that Christ saith, must be false: There is a point-blank contradiction between these two, and therefore either Christ must call in these words again, thus generally delivered and he must put in this exception, that you put in, or else Christs word and yours cannot agree.

You say, upon such considerations, there is no admittance, and upon such and such considerations there is admittance; Christ saith, *I will in no wise cast you out*; notwithstanding this consideration, I will receive you, be you what you will, doe but come, and for all that you shall be welcome.

Object. But some will say, men must be fitted for Christ, before Christ will ever own them.

Answer. I answer againe, Is there this exception put into the grant of Christ, except you be fitted for me, I will cast you out? Then you may say indeed, except you be fitted for Christ, he will cast you out: But then I say, how can this be true, *I will in no wise cast him out*; The words must runne thus? him that comes to me, if he be fitted and prepared, I will in no wise cast him out; but if he be not fitted and prepared, I will cast him out. But doe the words run so? Christ beloved, looks not for fitnessse, but people may be capable of communion with him, without fitnessse, he takes them into communion with himself, and afterwards fits them for such communion, as hee would have them; but before-hand there is no fitnessse; Suppose what fitnessse you will, in expecting of the grant; I say in the expecting of the grant of Christ, fitnessse or not fitnessse is all one; *Come to me, I will in no wise cast you out.*

Object. Peradventure though the Text seem to be clear; yet you will say, surely the grace of God is not so large, as you seem to expresse it, there must be something expected and considered in the person comming, or there will be no receiving and entertaining by Christ.

Y 2

Answer:

Ans. Beloved, if it were an easie thing, if time would give leave, to shew, that through the whole Scriptures, the Lord Christ hath such a purpose to set forth the glory of the grace of his Father, as that he will have men know, that all the fitnessse of persons to communicate or participate of Christ, is their desperate sinfulnessse, I say nothing but sinfulnessse is that which is the fitnessse that Christ looks for in persons. I beseech you beloved, peruse that passage never to be forgotten, *Ezek. 16.* where the holy Ghost in the beginning of the chapter, first states the case concerning the condition of persons, then makes the conclusion; the state being granted. Suppose your condition of sinfulnessse rise up to the height of the illustration there mentioned of a child polluted in his blood; which kind of expression the holy Ghost useth as that which doth of all other things in the world most set out the loathsom nastinessse, and intolerable filthinesse of sinfulnessse in persons; *Thy father was an Amorite, thy mother was an Hittite: in the day of thy nativity, thy navell was not cut, thou wast polluted in thy blood, neither wast thou washed with water to supple thee, thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all; and no eye pittied thee, to doe any of these things unto thee; but thou wast cast out to the loathing of thy person:* Here is the nature of the sinfulnessse of persons polluted in blood: There was such a filthy loathsomnesse in this pollution, that it was beyond the pittie of any creature, it was so abominable filthy, that there was no place for pittie: Nay more, such pollution of blood there was that did occasion casting out, as if the abiding of that person in the room any longer, would poyson
all

al the rest, and therefore because there could not be enduring of that loathsomnesse any longer, there must be flinging out upon the dunghill.

Suppose your sinnes rise to this very height, and there is such a stench of filthinesse in them that all the world should even vomit to think of that sinfulness that you have acted and committed, What of all this? Surely you will say, there is no portion in Christ for me, as long as my case is such a case as this. Observe the strange expression of the holy Ghost, *When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thy blood, I said unto thee, Live;* There is a great deal of difference between saying, live, and casting out of such persons. When no eye pittied thee, that time that was the time of thy blood, *That time was the time of love.* This is strange indeed, that all the creatures in the world should even spue out such a person, as should be so abominable, that men should abhorre him, and yet the time of such pollution should be Christs time of love. Well, but you will say, surely before Christ will communicate himself, and give up himself to such persons, for all this, the case must be altered with this person: You shall see it's no such matter, but directly the contrary, *Thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness;* yea, *I swore unto thee, and entered into Covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine:* What strange expressions are here, Me thinks your hearts cannot but be rapped up into heaven in admiration of these expression: These expressions the Lord aggravates to the highest tearms that can bee imagined; setting forth the most horrible

loathsomnes of the sinfulness of persons; And yet that time of sinfulness was the *time of Gods love*, and not onely the time of love, but a time wherein God swore to, and entred into Covenant with this person, and God became his.

But you will say, there was some cleansing before, you shall see the holy Ghost in the next words makes it appeare it is not so, mark the words well; *Then washed I thee with water, yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood*: Then, when I entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine. Here was not first a washing, and then swearing, and entring into Covenant; but there is first swearing and entring into Covenant, and then washing with water afterwards. But beloved, here is a comming and closing with Jesus Christ, even while the state of a person is the filthiest in the world: And I tell you beloved, either you must close with Christ for your comfort, as you are in no other condition in the world, but filthy, stinking creatures; or you must never receive Christ while you live; *Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*. You that will bring righteousness with you, to be received of Christ; I tell you, Christ came not to save such persons; *Christ came to save that which was lost*: Hee dyed for the *ungodly*, Romanes the fifth. But you will say, for all this high aggravation of loathsomnes, of sinfulness, my case is worse then all this that you speak of; therefore there is something in my condition, that if I come to Christ hee must cast me off; here is nothing but positive filthinesse: It is true indeed, this condition is very bad, but my case rises higher,

er, besides a positive lothfomnesse in my selfe ; I am a rebell , a sturdy enemy , I fight against God, I quarrell with God, and take up Armes against him. Beloved , imagine your condition a condition of as great enmity and madnesse against God, as your hearts can possibly devise ; What then ? sure you will say, if I be such an enemy, I must lay down Armes before Christ will have to do with me , or admit me to come to him. Will a King let a cut-throat Traytor, while he hath thoughts in his heart to murder him ; will he let him come with a naked knife into his presence , and graciously embrace him in his Armes ? For answer still. see the close of the text, observe that if this be true, that in respect of this rebelliousnesse in thy spirit against God, thou say, if I come, Christ will cast me off; this word [*in no wise*] cannot be true : For here is a consideration as before that makes an exception, and so frustrates thy entrance to Christ, though there be comming. Beloved, do you think it was out of the thoughts of Christ, to wit, your enmity, and rebellion; and if he thought of it, do you think he would not have put it in ?

Surely, Christ he was wise enough , and knew what he said, and certainly he had rebelliousnes in self in his thoughts, when he spake the words *in no wise*; and certainly this shall not prejudice you, but if you come to Christ , he is as much yours, as if you never took up Armes against him,

But to clear up this truth to you more fully, look into *Psal. 68. 18.* *Thou hast ascended upon high , and hast led captivity captive, and thou hast received gifts for men, even for the rebellious , that God might dwell among them,*

mark it well beloved, you say there is no dwelling for Christ with rebels, that is your position: I am a rebel, there can be no entertainment with Christ for me: but saith the Text, note it I pray, he received gifts for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them. If that be not cleare enough, look into *Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8.* *If when wee were enemies wee were reconciled to God by the death of his Sonne, much more being reconciled, wee shall be saved:* Mark the expression, it is a strange one. You must directly deny the truth of that the Apostle saith, if you will stand to this principle, that as long as you are enemies there is no admittance unto Christ for you: For saith the Text, *while wee were enemies, we were reconciled,* not that Christ provided reconciliation for enemies, that when they be amended, they shall be saved, but during enmity it self they receive Reconciliation. I do not speak this to the intent that any should conceive that God leaves persons rebellious, vile, and loathsome as he doth find them, when he closeth with them; but I say, at that time when the Lord closeth with persons, he closeth with them in such a state of rebellion; and if thou come to Christ in this condition, it manifestly shall appeare to thee that he will open his bosome for thy head to rest upon as well as for the righteousst person in the world, and his breast for thy mouth to suck.

He shuts the door to none that comes; *No every one that shipstealeth, let him come and drink of the water of life freely.* Let every one, there is not one exempted: yet not I, saith one, not I, saith another; but the holy Ghost saith, *let every one come.* No man under Heaven

ven that hath a heart to come, and suck of the breasts of Christ, but the way is free for him, the fountain is set open for all sin and uncleanness. At the pool of *Bethesa* every impotent person might step in : At the Bath, the poorest man in the world may go if he will, and step in : neither is the loathsome person in the world excluded. Now Christ is that bath opened for all commers, there is no commere shall ever be cast off. I dare be bold to say, there never did miscarry any person in the world that indeed did come to Christ : If there did any miscarry, there is no credit to be given to the words of Christ himself.

But I see I must hasten : I come to consider the power of this expression to persons that had the light risen to them, but think now darkness is come over them againe ; I mean those that have received Christ, and have believed, but something or other hath happened, that even they do suspect, that if they should come to Christ, he would cast them off. But if the first proposition be granted, that is discusst then much more this, *Hee that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all ; how shall he not with him give us all things ? Rom. 8. 32. If while wee were enemies wee were reconciled to God by the death of his Sonne, much more being reconciled, shall we bee saved by his life, Ro. 5. 10. If while we were without strength, Christ in due time died for the ungodly ; If while we were sinners Christ died for us, how much more shall we be saved from wrath being reconciled ? All this is to shew that if Christ did not shut out persons in the worst condition, when they had no acquaintance at all with him, much lesse will he cast out those that*

that he hath had familiarity with in former times. There is no condition in the World a believer is subject to, that may occasion the least suspicion that Christ will cast him out if he come.

But you will say, suppose a believer falls into some scandalous sins, into some notorious sins, it may be to commit Murther and Adultery together as *David* did, surely now there is some cause of suspicion that if he come presently to Christ after he commits these things, Christ will send him packing. I answer, if this be true, there must be a putting in of this exception into the text, if thou that art a believer commit such and such a sin, though thou come to me, I will cast thee out. And if it be so, Christ must cut off that large expression of his, *I will in no wise cast thee off*.

Object You will say this is strange Doctrine: suppose a believer commit adultery, and murther, may he presently look upon Christ, and in Christ see a discharge of his sins, and reconciliation by Christ, and part in Christ at that very time he commits them? surely there must be large humiliation, and confession of these sins, and there must be a good long continuance in this too: he must not apply comfort presently, there must be more brokenness of heart yet, and more yet, and more yet: this is the objection of the World.

An. I confesse the crime is great, in this kind, and it may be for the present, the crime may silence the voice of truth it self; but whatever becomes of it, that Christ may have the glory of his grace, and the glory of that fulness of redemption wrought all at once, let me tell you: Believers cannot commit those

those finnes that may give just occasion of suspiti-
on to them, that if they come to Christ hee would
cast them out. Let me not be mistaken in that I
say, I know the enemies of the Gospel will make
an evill construction of it; yet a Believer, I say, can-
not commit those sins that can give occasion to
him to suspect, that if he come presently to Christ,
Christ would cast him off.

Obj^t. But must not he confesse first, and bee
afflicted in his soul, before he can thinke he shall be
received if he come?

Ans^r. For answer to it: first, I deny not but
acknowledge, when a believer sins, he must con-
fesse these sins, and the greatest end, and ground
of this confession, is that which *Joshua* speakes con-
cerning *Achan*, *Iosh. 7. 19.* My Sonne, confesse thy
faults, and give glory to God. A Believer in con-
fession of sin, gives glory to the great God of Hea-
ven and earth, and that must be the glorious end
of the confession of his sin, that God may be ow-
ned, as the sole and only Saviour: except we doe
acknowledge sin, we cannot acknowledge salvati-
on: wee cannot acknowledge any vertue in the
works and sufferings of Christ, Christ might have
saved his labour, and never come into the World,
all that Christ did, could not be acknowledged to
be of worth to us, if there had not been sin from
which Christ should save us. He that doth indeed
confesse his sin, doth indeed confesse he had peri-
shed if Christ had not died for him: nay, hee con-
fesses, nothing in the world but *Christ* could save him.

Secondly, I grant, the believer should be sensi-
ble of sin, that is, of the nature of sinne. But this is
that

that I mainly desire to imprint upon your spirits, that a believer may certainly conclude, even before confession of sinne, the reconciliation that is made between God and him, the interest hee hath in Christ, and the love of Christ embracing him. In a word, beloved, before a believer doth confesse his sin, he may be as certaine of the pardon of it, as after confession: I say, there is as much ground to be confident of the pardon of sin to a believer, as soon as ever he hath committed it, though he hath not made a solemn act of confession, as to believe it after he hath performed all the humiliation in the world. What is the ground of the pardon of sin? *I, even I am hee that blotteth out thy transgressions for my owne name sake*: Here is pardon, and the fountaine of it is in God himself. What is it that doth discharge a believer, the rise of it is *Gods name sake*. If this be the ground of pardon, then this being held out, a believer may be assured of pardon as soon as he committs any sin, and may close with it; Beloved, pardon of sinne depends upon the unchangeablenesse of God, and not on the stability of the creature. All the pardon in the world that any person shall enjoy is revealed in this word of grace, and it is the most absurd thing in the world to think that the soule may fetch out a pardon any where, but in the word of grace. Is pardon held out in the word of grace, and held out to sinners, as they are sinners? And doth God hold out his love to persons *before good or evil bee done by them, & the purpose of GOD may stand according to election, not of works, but of grace*? And doth a believer find it thus in the word of grace, and may not hee rest upon

upon it when he finds it? I beseech you consider; Either Christ did not reckon with the Father for all the sins of his people one with another, when he did offer up himself; I say, either he did not reckon for them all, or he did: If he leave out such and such a scandalous sin, when he reckoned with the Father; then Christ did not save to *the utmost all them that come to God by him*, then there must come another Saviour to reckon for that which Christ left out.

Well you will say, Christ did reckon for all sin with his Father; If he did reckon with the Father for all, then did Christ pay the Father the full price for every one, when he died upon the Crosse; then the Father being paid therein satisfaction was acknowledged from the hand of the Father: He hath beheld the travell of his Soule, and he is satisfied: *and the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sinne*, 1 Joh. 1. 7. Well, doth God acknowledge full satisfaction for all sin under hand and seale? If it be so, what ground is there of suspicion that Christ will not receive you, but cast you off for such and such transgressions, rather then for such and such other transgressions? If the reckoning were for all; wherefore doe you make such a distinction where God makes none? If the reckoning be made for all one with another, and the price be paid for all, wherein comes the ground of suspicion? Hath God taken pay for all, and doth that sinne being committed appeare before God still? and must he have more then Christ hath paid? Doe not entertaine such base thoughts of God. There is not a sin committed this day, but it was

as cleere before God from all eternity with all the aggravation, as it is now when it is committed; and when God reckoned with Christ for the sins of beleevvers, hee took into his consideration the utmost extent of every sinne, what it would rise unto, and took a price answerable to the nature and quality of them of his sonne: be they small or great, be they what they will be, the price was raised by the Father upon the back and score of Christ, answerable to the transgression.

Now hath Christ paid all to the utmost farthing, how comes God then to put in this as an exception, as if now there were something done that requires something more then what Christ hath done, before G O D, and you can be friends?

Object. You will say peradventure, in all this will we directly strike at all manner of meeting with God in humiliation and prayer, and fasting, and confession of sinnes.

Answer. I answere with the Apostle, Doe we herein make void the Law? God forbid, yea, rather we establish it: May not a person come and acknowledge his fault to his prince after hee hath received his pardon under the hand of his Prince, when he is brought from the place of execution; nay, may not he acknowledge it with melting and extreame bitternesse of Spirit, because hee knoweth hee hath a pardon? It is but a sordid and grosse conceit in the heart of persons, to think that there can be no humiliation for sinne, except persons be in despaire: I say, beloved, that when Christ doth reveale himself to your spirits, you shall find your hearts

hearts more wrought upon, with sweet meltings, and relentings of heart, and breakings of spirit, when you see your finnes pardoned, then in the most despairing condition you can be in. It hath been often taken notice of, of many malefactors, that though when they have come to the place of execution, their hearts have been so hard, that they could not shed a teare; yet when they have heard their pardon read, and see themselves out of danger, their hearts that were so hard before have melted into floods of teares: And so I say, that heart that could not relent to see the filthy loathsomnesse of sin, while he did not see his pardon; yet after the knowledge of the pardon thereof doth melt into teares, and hath such relenting, that none in the World can have, but he that knoweth it: I say, *The grace of God which brings salvation having appeared unto men, doth more teach them to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World,* then all the arguments besides can perswade men even for the glory of their God, the manifestation of their thankfulnesse to him, and the being fruitfull unto other; we are to walk in every way that God hath chalked out unto us: But if we thinke our righteousnesse, and our deep humiliation and large relents of spirit, and sorrow for sin, and our confession thereof, must make our way to the bowels of Christ, take heed beloved, lest you set up a false Christ, when you bring any thing to Christ, you dethrone him of that, which is his greatest prerogative, and give it to your Fasting, and Humiliations.

It is the prerogative of Christ alone to bring you to himself : But you will say, all the promises of pardon do run with this proviso, in case men do humble themselves, in case men do this and that, then pardon is theirs ; but otherwise it is none of theirs : Take heed of such doctrine, we have had Arminianisme exceedingly applauded amongst us hitherto, and there hath been much complaint against it, but if we conceive that God in pardoning sin, hath an Eye to confession of sin ; here is the doing of works for pardon of sin, and how far short this comes of Arminianisme, let all the World judge.

Beloved, consider I beseech you, doth God give grace upon obedience ? What power shall work such a disposition, supposing a branch be a branch of the wild Vine that is mentioned in the Prophet *Isaiah*, such a branch as there is death in it, what shall alter the nature of that deadnesse in this branch ? must not there be an ingrafting of it into the true Vine, must not the wild Olive be put into the sweet Olive, before the Olive cease to be wild, and become a good branch ? You must know that we are all wild Vines, bring forth fruit unto death, how shal our qualities be changed ? must we be changed first and then being changed come to Christ ? Is it not Christ the Vine, who by vertue of our union to himself doth change our corrupt & bad natures ? do you think that a branch of the wild Olive, must become a branch of the true Olive before it can be put into the true Olive, and then in regard of that, be put into the true Olive ? Oh, that the Order of Christ may be established

blished with you ; namely, Christs beginning to
 close with men in bloud, and the power of Christ
 thus beginning with man framing the spirits of
 men to himselfe in such a manner, that neither
 Men, nor Angells, nor any other Creature can
 frame any spirit for Christ, till Christ come Him-
 selfe. It is certaine beloved, *without him you can doe
 nothing*, as hee saith himselfe, *Ioh. 15.* and as the Apo-
 stle confesseth of himselfe, *Romans 7. of my selfe I can
 doe nothing* : How will you therefore have gracious
 or precious dispositions and qualifications as you
 call them, before Christ can owne you, when as it
 must bee that Christ, and Christ given, that must
 frame these dispositions in you ? You must, you
 say, have eyes to see your folly and misery, and bee
 humbled in the sence thereof, and hearts to close
 with Christ, and then Christ will become yours.
 How contrary is this to the Lord by his Prophet
*Esay 42. I give thee for a Covenant to the people to o-
 pen the blind eyes* ? Who opens these blind eyes, but
 Christ as hee is given for a Covenant to open
 them ? Can men see either their own folly, or behold
 their need of Christ, or conceive the sweetnesse of
 Christ, while they are starke blind ? They are starke
 blind till Christ, after he is given for a covenant, opens
 the eyes of men : To thinke that men have their eyes
 opened before they come to Christ, whereas when
 they come to Christ he opens them, is to say wee see
 when we are blind.

You shall see in Scripture, that Christ is given
 so freely to men, that all considerations are taken
 away from them ; that all discouragements may
 bee taken from a sinner, that if hee come to Christ
 and close with him, if he have a heart, hee may
 come without bar. To conclude, if there be any
 willingnesse

willingnesse in thee to close with Christ, so that
 faine thou wouldst close with him if thou mightest:
 I say, thou mayest receive all the embraces of
 Christ into thy Armes, and receive the kisses of Christ
 upon thy mouth, with as much boldnesse and
 confidence as any believer in the World. For it is
 not for their sakes, nor for their amendments and reformation,
 nor their righteousnesse, nor holinesse, that
 Christ hath mercy on them, but for his owne sake it
 is that Christ doth embrace and manifest his love unto them.

*If Christ thou know, it will suffice,
 Though else thou knowest naught;
 If Christ be bid, thou art not wise,
 Though all else thou be taught.*



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